

Hotaru's Way

Satoru Hiura

1



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LIGHT 1	★	Himono, Thrown Into the Ocean	4
LIGHT 2	★	Himono in Love, Taking the First Step	43
LIGHT 3	★	Himono's Major Dating Strategy	71
LIGHT 4	★	Himono's Stormy Night	99
LIGHT 5	★	Himono, the First Sleepover	128
LIGHT 6	★	Himono and the Autumn Intruder	159
SPECIAL FEATURE	★	Interview with Satoru Hiura Four Panel Comic Himono Status Check DX	188



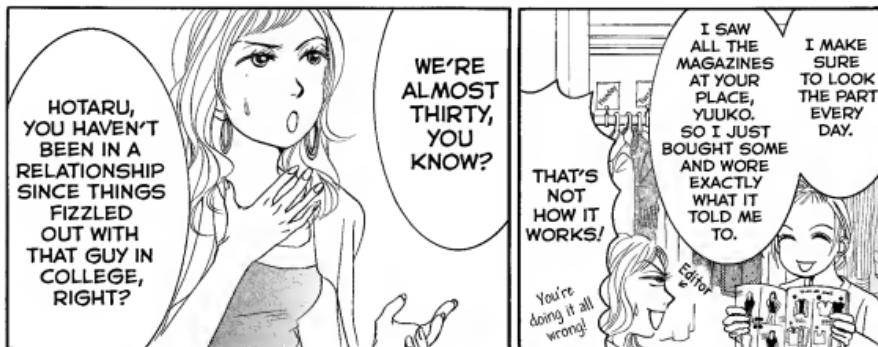




Hotaru's Way



OL stands for Office Lady. It refers to a female office worker who performs typically female-coded tasks such as making tea and secretarial work. They are typically unmarried and often thought of as a spinster type.



MONTHLY OUTFIT FROM OL MAGAZINE ↑



TAKANO-BUCHOU IS SUCH A HOTTIE, ISN'T HE?

UNTIL ONE FATEFUL DAY, WHEN EVERYTHING CHANGED.

I THOUGHT SEIICHI TAKANO-BUCHOU WAS A GUY, I ENJOYED WORKING UNDER.

I FELT THE SAME WAY.

← Hotaru, office edition

NOT AT ALL. HIS WORK IS EFFICIENT, AND HE'S GOT GREAT STYLE.

(25)

YOU THINK SO? WELL, HE SURE DOESN'T LOOK FORTY-ONE.

(30)

Buchou means department head. It's a common way of addressing one's boss.

GRAB

CREAK

ぎし

CREAK

ぎし

CREAK

ぎし

CREAK

...

zzzz

UNTIL THINGS CHANGED...

BEED

BEED
...
...
...



HOW
MANY
TIMES
DO I HAVE
TO SAY IT
BEFORE
YOU
UNDER-
STAND?

I TOLD
YOU NOT
TO SLEEP
IN THE
SHARED
AREAS!

DON'T
STOMP ALL
AROUND
THE PLACE!
YOU'RE
KICKING UP DUST!

Y-YES,
SIR!

AIR OUT
YOUR FUTON,
TOO! AND
BRING IT BACK
IN BEFORE WE
GO TO WORK!

I'LL
WASH
UP RIGHT
NOW! AND
CHANGE
CLOTHES!

OH, MY GOD!
YOUR FACE!
YOUR CLOTHES!
THOSE AREN'T
THE SAME ONES
AS YESTERDAY,
ARE THEY?!

O-
OKAY
...

WOBBLE
WOBBLE

I...
DON'T
REALLY
WANT
TO EAT...

THAT'S
RIGHT.
RIGHT
NOW.
I'M...

I
WANT TO
SLEEP...

My head is
spinning for
an entirely
different
reason.

DON'T
HOLD
BACK.
EAT UP.

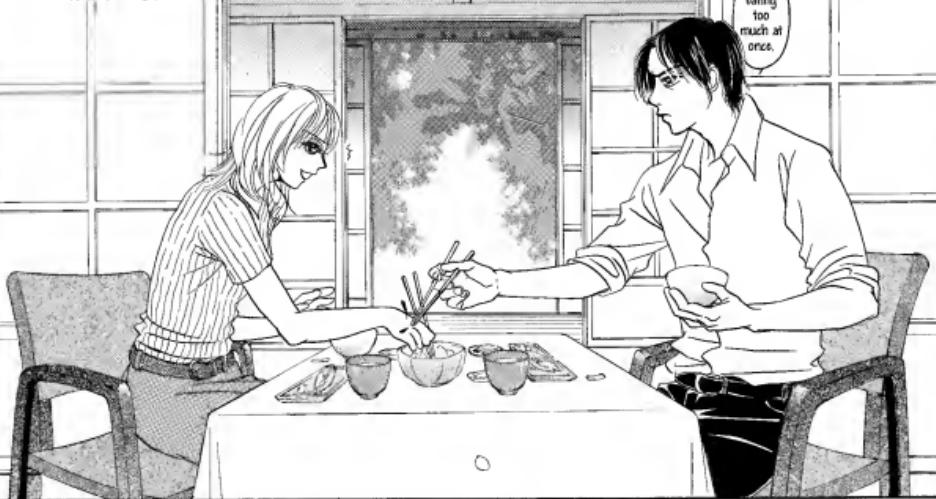
Whether it's
a portion for
one or two,
it's all the
same.

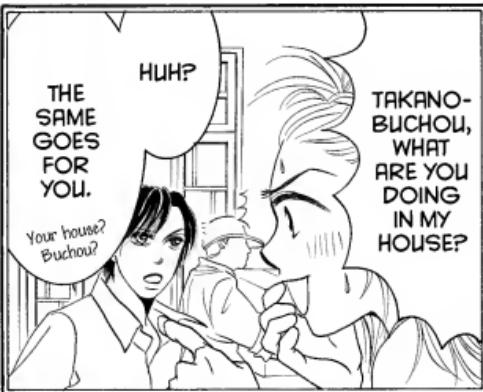
IF YOU
EAT A
GOOD
BREAKFAST,
IT'LL KEEP
YOUR HEAD
FROM
SPINNING
ALL DAY.

...TERRIFYING
AND UPTIGHT
SEIICHI
TAKANO.

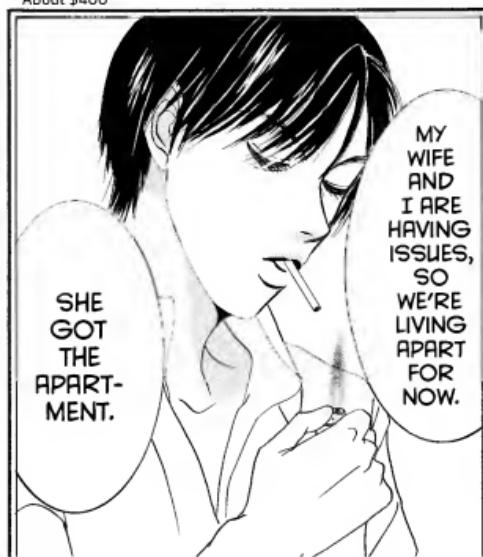
...LIVING
WITH
THE...

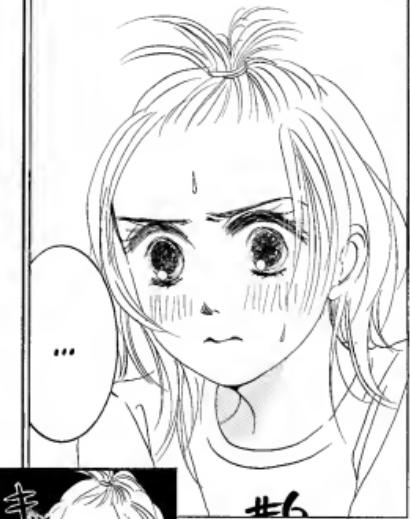
You're
eating
too
much at
once.





*About \$400





ALL
RIGHT,
THEN.
LET'S LIVE
TOGETHER
FOR
THE TIME
BEING.

SPARKLE

I KNOW.

YOU CAN
RENT OUT
THE ROOM ON
THE SECOND
FLOOR FOR
10,000 YEN
A MONTH.*

JUST
UNTIL YOU
FIND A
PLACE
TO GO.

WHAT?
ME AND
YOU...?!

*About \$100

ESPECIALLY
NOT AFTER
SEEING YOU
DRESSED
LIKE THAT.

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
THINGS
GETTING
AWKWARD.
I DON'T
SEE YOU
AS A
WOMAN
AT ALL.

TRYING TO HIDE THE
FACT THAT SHE'S NOT
WEARING A BRA.

THE
LIVING
ROOM,
KITCHEN,
AND
BATHROOM
ARE SHARED
SPACES.
IF YOU USE
THEM, YOU
HAVE TO
FOLLOW
THE
RULES.

10,000
YEN?

GULP

NOTARU

SHARED AREAS

TAKANO

AND THAT'S HOW I STARTED LIVING THIS COHABITING LIFESTYLE THAT I HAD TO KEEP SECRET FROM EVERYONE.

LIVES HIS LIFE ACCORDING TO A SCHEDULE.

"I COULD SAY THE SAME ABOUT YOU" IS → WHAT SHE WANTED TO SAY.

STEP

STEP

STEP



SPACED OUT

HOTARU, YOU LOOK SO WORN OUT!

HIS NAME IS MAKOTO TESHIMA.

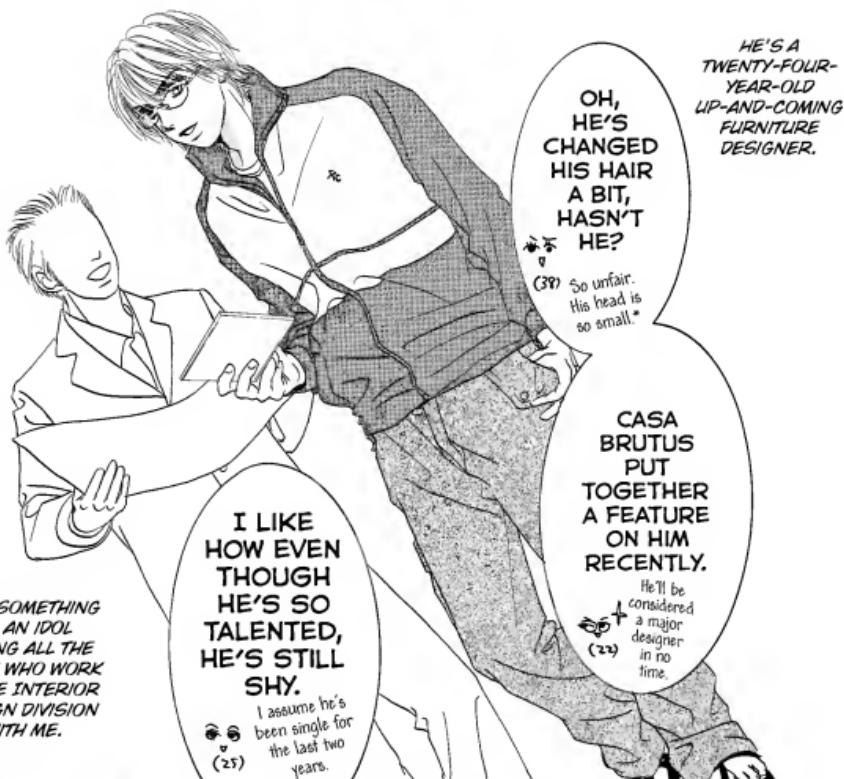
ALL THE GIRLS ARE ALREADY WAITING THERE FOR HIM.

I've got to fix my makeup first!

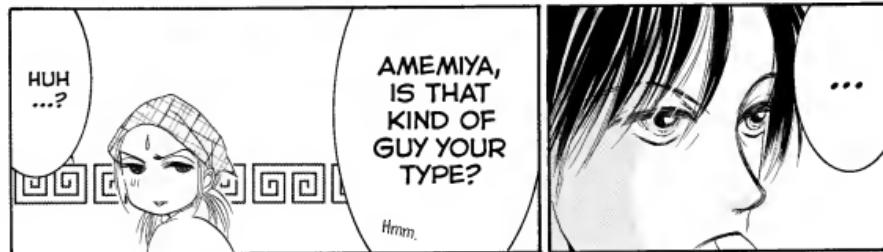
WHAT DID YOU SAY? IS HE IN THE MEETING ROOM?

UH-OH! YOU'D BETTER PERK UP! THE HEALING PRINCE IS COMING THIS AFTERNOON!

MY CURRENT LIFE-STYLE...IS EXHAUSTING FOR VARIOUS REASONS ...



* In Japan, it's considered attractive to have a smaller face.



SO
YOU'RE
JUST
AFTER A
ONE-NIGHT
STAND OR
SOME-
THING?

YOU'VE
GOT IT
ALL
WRONG.
PEOPLE
LIKE
TESHIMA-
SAN
AREN'T
LIKE
THAT...

THEN
SHOULD
I HAVE
A TALK
WITH
HIM FOR
YOU?

H! WHOOSH

OH...

WH-
WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

TH-THIS
LOUSY OLD
MAN...

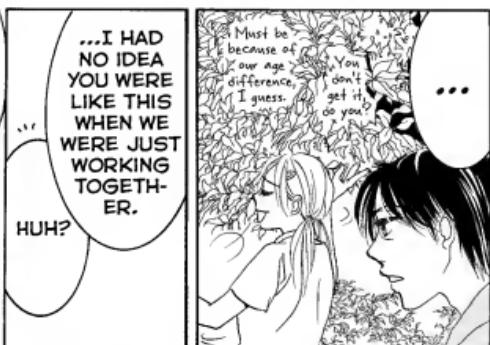
I JUST
LIKE
REMEM-
BERING
WHAT IT
FEELS
LIKE.
SOM-
THING
LIKE
THAT?

NOWADAYS,
THAT
JUNIOR-
HIGH AND
HIGH-
SCHOOL
PUPPY LOVE
IS GONE,
RIGHT?

...HE'S
THE IDOL
OF MY
HEART,
YOU
KNOW?

HIS
PRESENCE
JUST ADDS
A LITTLE
SOMETHING
EXTRA TO
MY LIFE.

I GUESS
YOU DON'T
HAVE
ANYONE
LIKE THAT,
DO YOU,
BUCHOU?



When Seiichi says "himono" here, he is referring to the "dried fish" meaning of the word. It's the basis for where the slang version of himono comes from. He's basically saying she's all dried up and crusty instead of fresh and vibrant like other girls her age.

...I CAN
TEACH
YOU WHAT
TO DO.

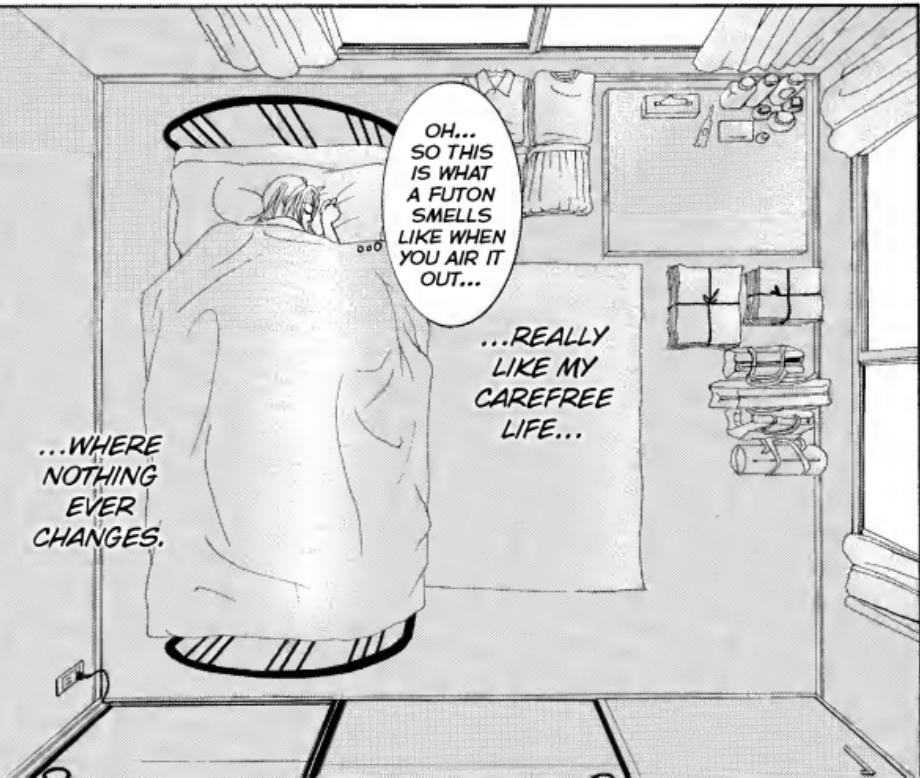
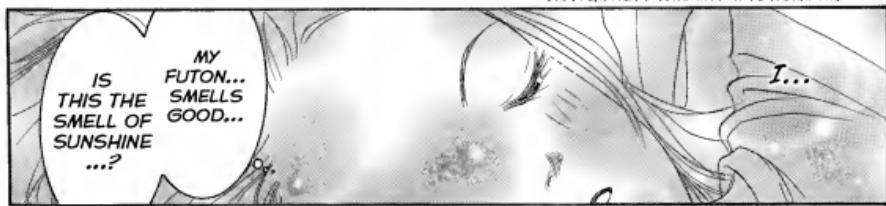
OH,
IF YOU'RE
TOO
WITHERED
TO KNOW
HOW MEN'S
HEARTS
WORK
ANYMORE
...

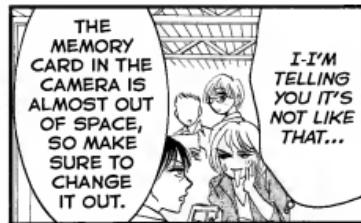


I'D
RATHER
HEAR THAT
KIND OF
STUFF FROM
FRIENDS MY
OWN AGE! WHY
DOES THAT
FORTY-ONE-
YEAR-OLD
GEEZER
HAVE TO BE
SO BLUNT
WITH ME?



I DON'T
NEED THAT
KIND OF HELP,
YOU LOUSY
OLD MAN!



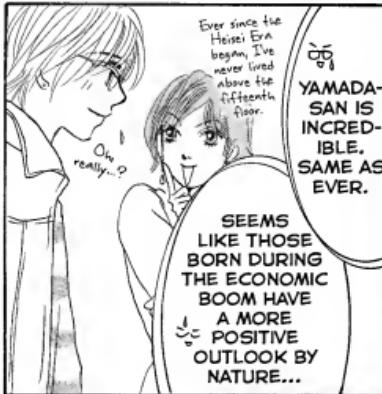




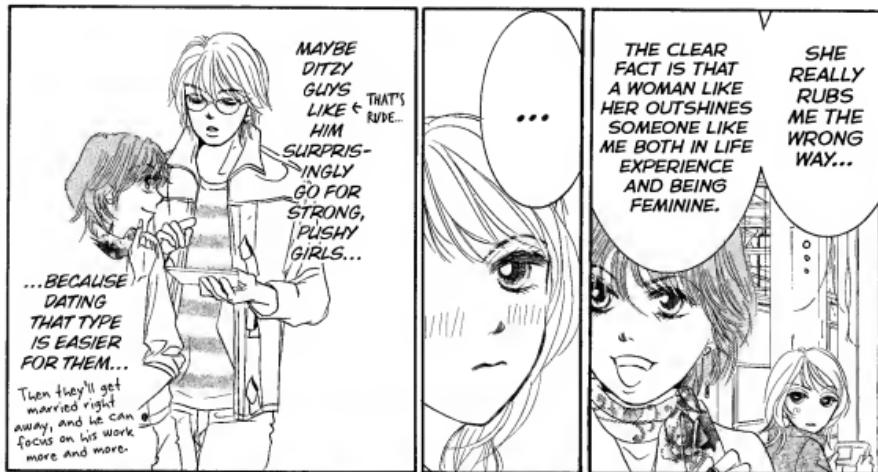
WHY DON'T YOU INTRUDE ON HIS PLACE, INSTEAD?



YOUR LITTLE SCHEME IS NOT GOING TO WORK!

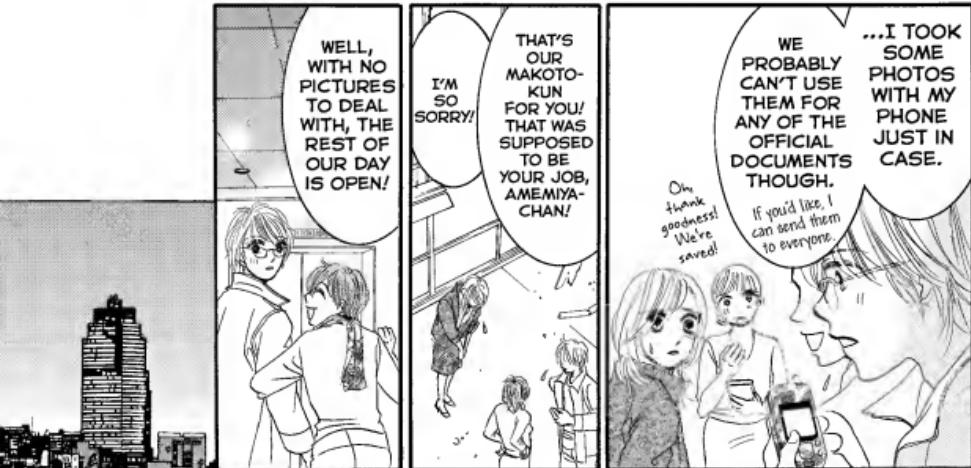


The Heisei Era is the current time period in Japan. It began in 1989 and continues into the present.

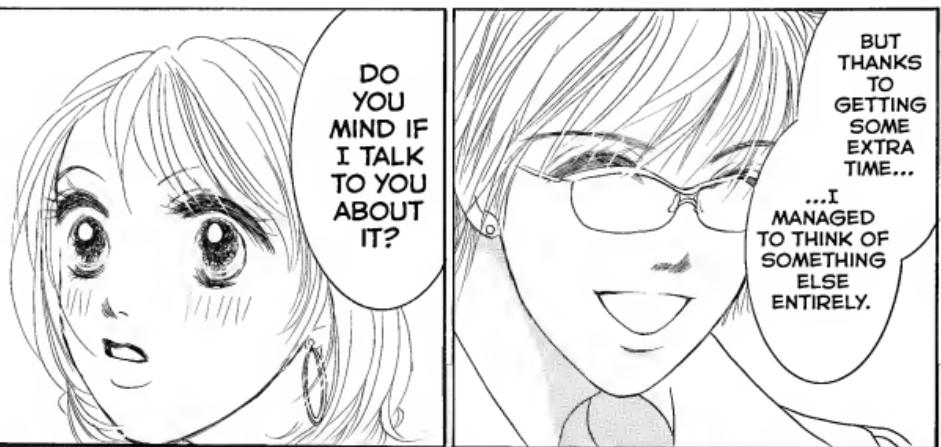


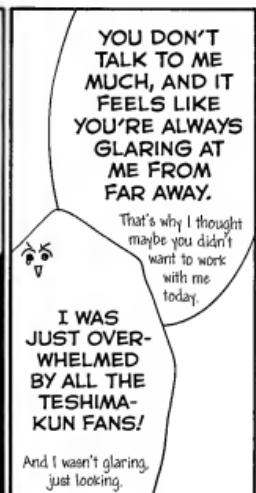
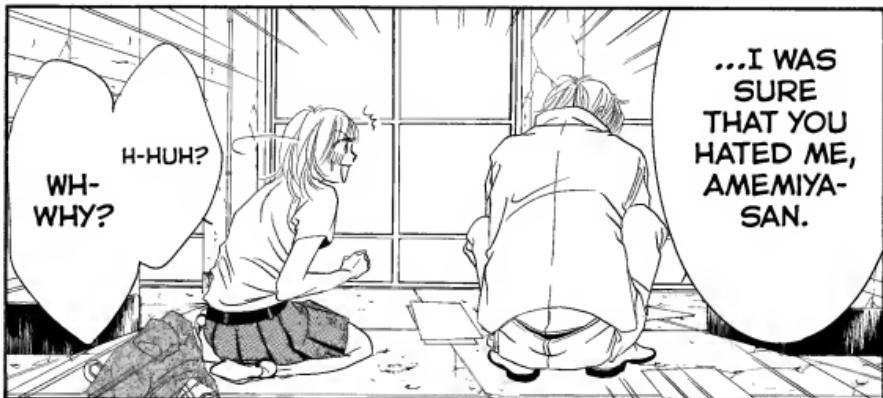
↑ SHE SPENDS MONEY ON FIXING HER TEETH, TOO...



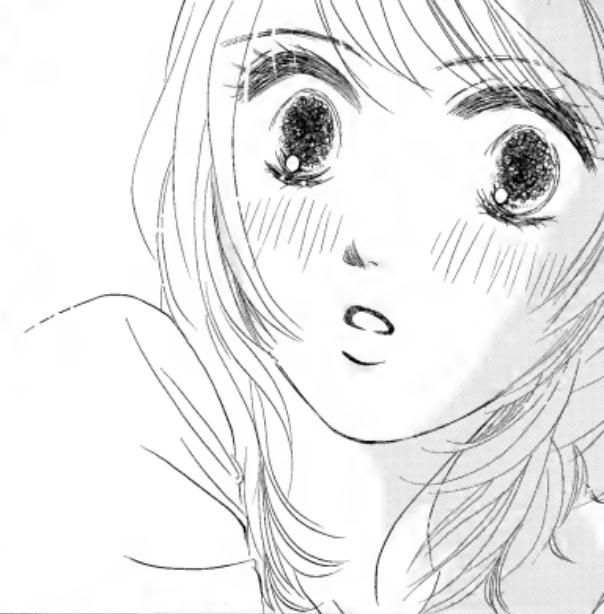
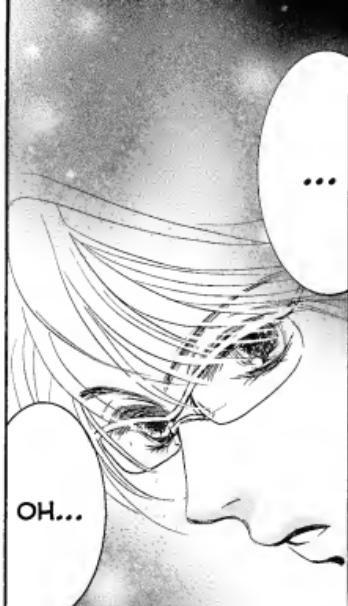
















I DON'T...
BELIEVE
IT...

SORRY,
BUT I'LL
BE GOING
NOW!

AH...

STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP

WHY
DID HE
KISS
ME?!

I MEAN,
HE
KISSED
ME...

And wh-why did
he do it twice...?

...COULD'NT
HAVE BEEN
REAL,
RIGHT?

THAT
KISS
JUST
NOW...

GASP

100 RULES FOR BEING SUCCESSFUL IN LOVE

FOR THE GIRL
WHO'S BEEN SINGLE FOREVER

FINDING LOVE AT
TWENTY SEVEN

Romance
Marriage

OR
MAYBE...
WHAT?!
WHILE I WAS
TAKING A
LIGHT BREAK
FROM
ROMANCE
...
...THE
WORLD-
STANDARD
OF KISSING
CHANGED?!

Today
was the first
time I've
even spoken
to him
directly.

N-NO
WAY? IT
CAN'T
BE!

WH-
WHEN
HE TALKED
ABOUT
FALLING
IN LOVE
EARLIER,
WAS THAT
ABOUT
ME?

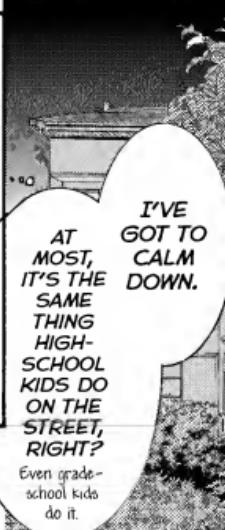
COULD
HE BE THE
SORT OF
GUY WHO
LOOKS SHY
BUT IS
ACTUALLY A
PLAYER
...?!

THAT'S GREAT! I'VE JUST HAD THE MOST SHOCKING INCIDENT OF THE ENTIRE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY! O-KAY, SO, IT WAS LIKE THIS...

HUH? YOU JUST FINISHED PROOF-READING? YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE DYING?

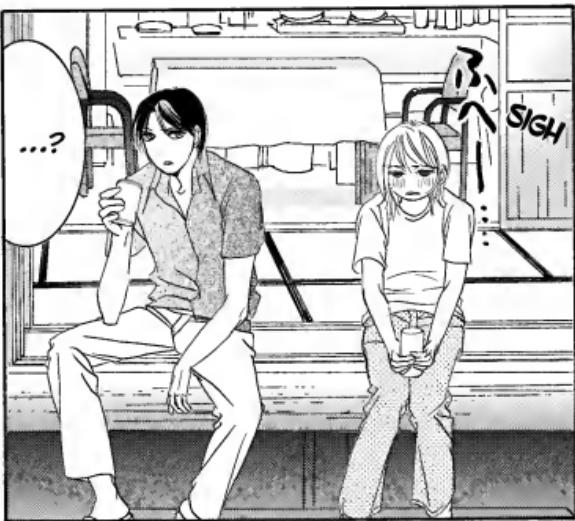
STEP STEP STEP STEP STEP

MAAM...?









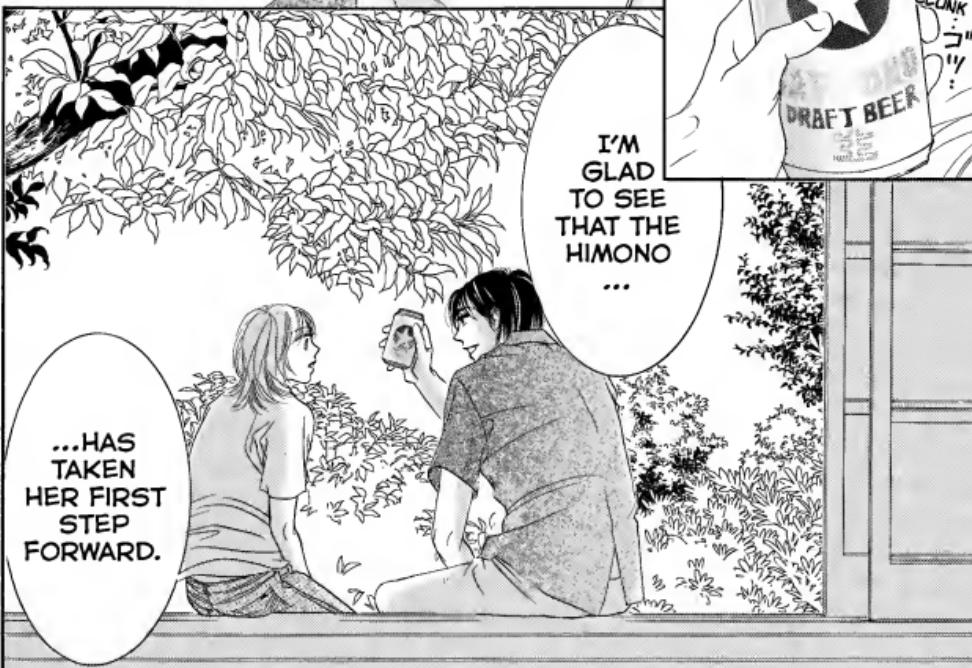






...THE
QUESTION
IS HOW THE
PERSON
RECEIVING
THE
KISS WILL
INTERPRET
IT.

IN
ANY
CASE
...





WELL, MY
GENERAL
OPINION
...

OH,
OKAY
THEN.



I-IT'S NOT
ABOUT ME! I-I
JUST WANTED A
SOLID GENERAL
OPINION!
ANYWAY, IT'S ABOUT
TIME FOR ME TO
GO TO BED!



...WOULD
BE TO
GIVE IT
YOUR ALL
...

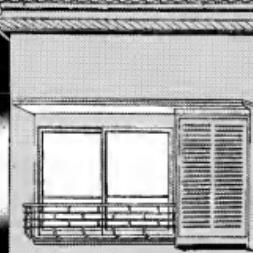


GOOD
NIGHT...
BOSS.



IF YOU
WANT
AN OLD
TIMER'S
GENERAL
OPINION
...

...I'LL
GIVE
IT YOU
ANYTIME.





Hotaru's Way ★ LIGHT 2

Himono in Love, Taking the First Step

THIS SUMMER, MY LIFE AS
A SO-CALLED HIMONO...

...LOOKS LIKE IT'S
ABOUT TO CHANGE.

...
SIGH

JOLI

BANG! BANG!

SQUEAL

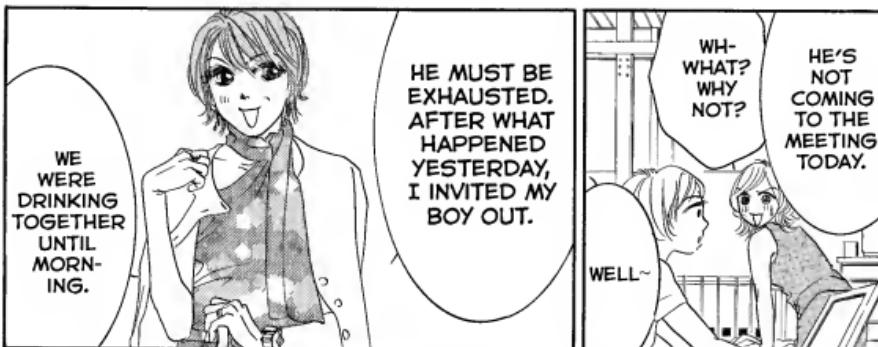
BECAUSE! IT'S
ACTUALLY BEEN
FIVE YEARS SINCE
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS
HAPPENED!



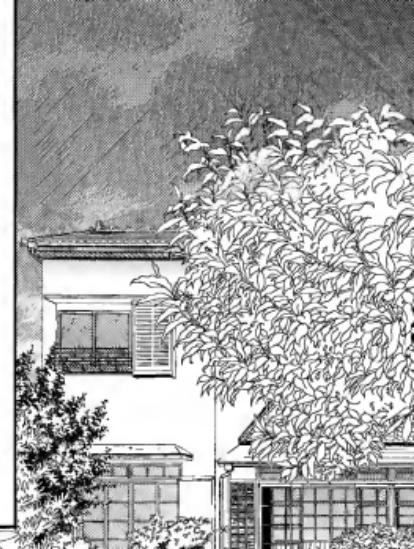
THIS IS THE
KIND OF THING
WHERE YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO
GIVE YOUR
ALL!

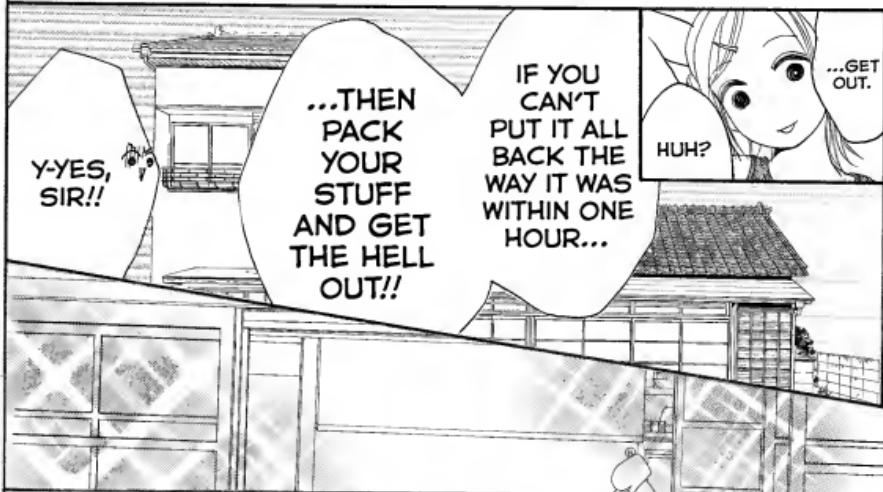
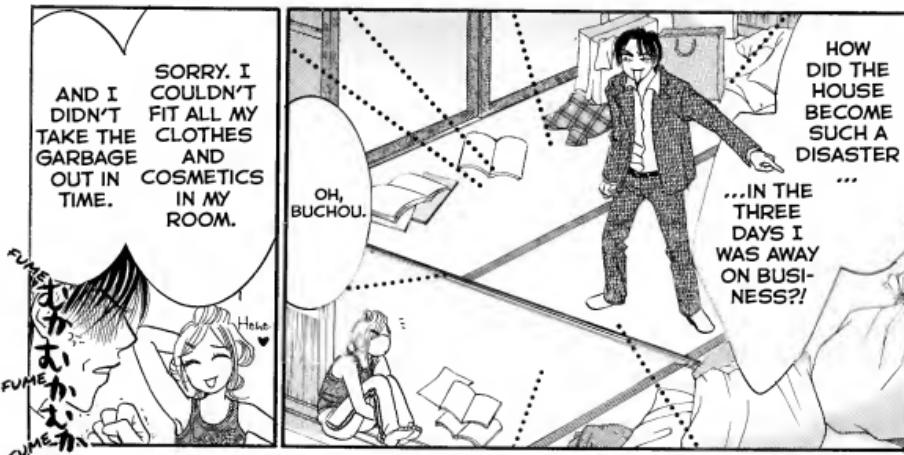


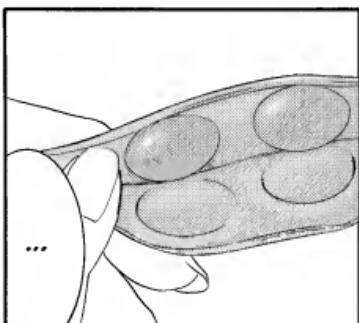


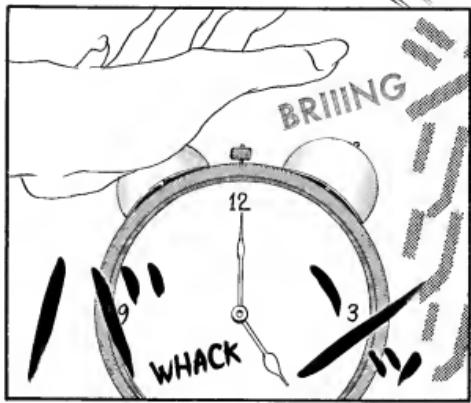


ONE WEEK LATER ...



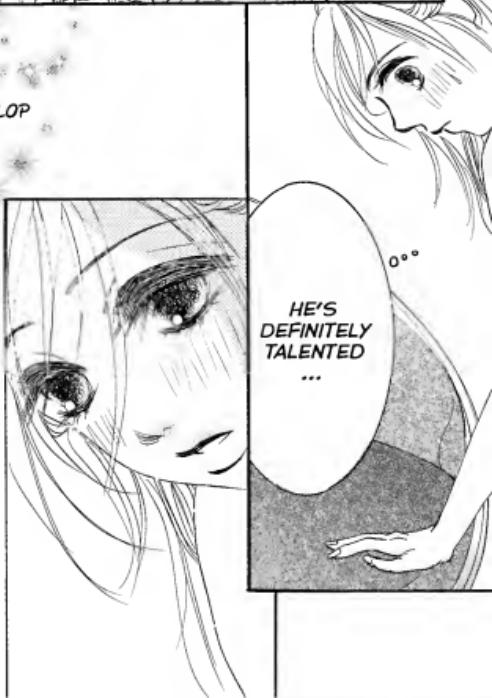
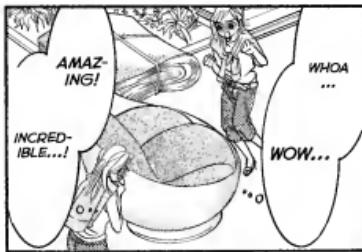
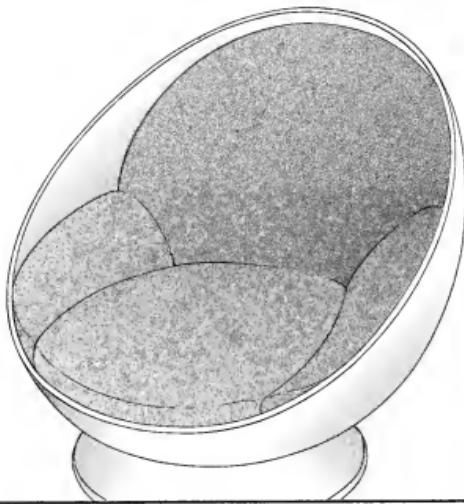
















IT'S ALSO
BEEN WAY
TOO LONG...

...SINCE THE WORDS
"I'LL DO MY BEST"
LEFT MY MOUTH.

I'LL
DO MY
BEST!

...UNDER-
STOOD!

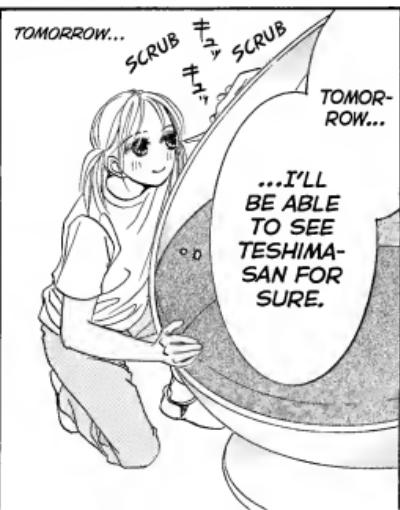
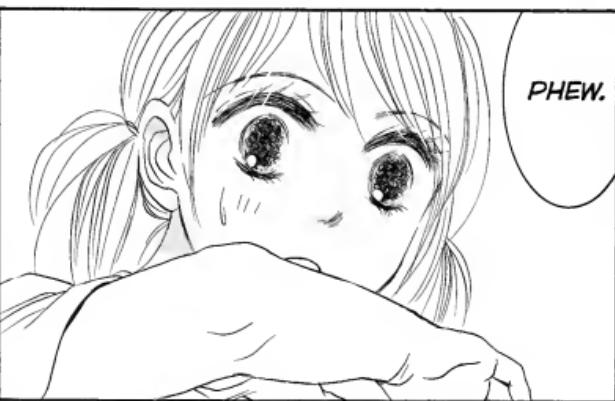
RIGHT
NOW...

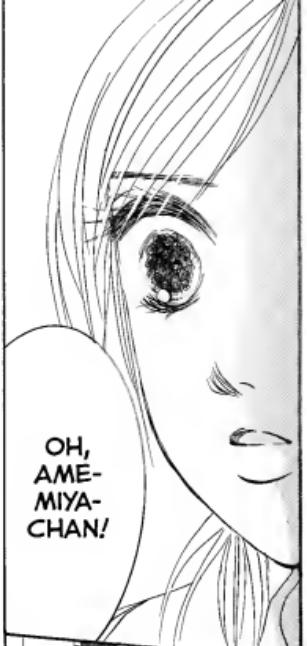
...I FEEL LIKE
I'M CAPABLE
OF ANYTHING.



TOMORROW
IS THE
OPENING
PARTY AT
THE NT
BUILDING,
RIGHT?







UM...

...I WAS
PUT IN
CHARGE OF
ORGANIZING
THE PARTY
TOMORROW.

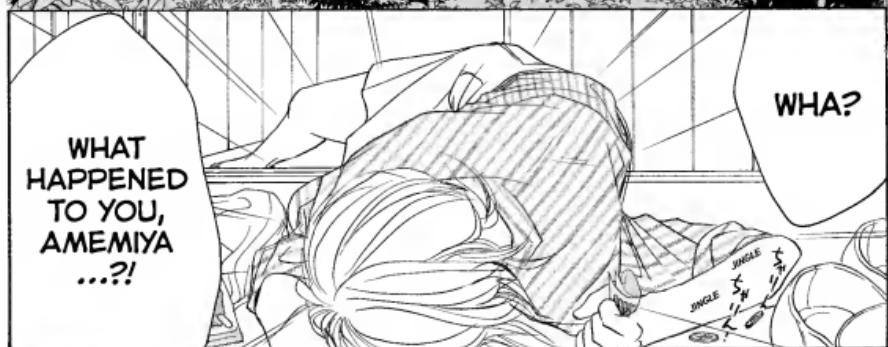
...SORRY.

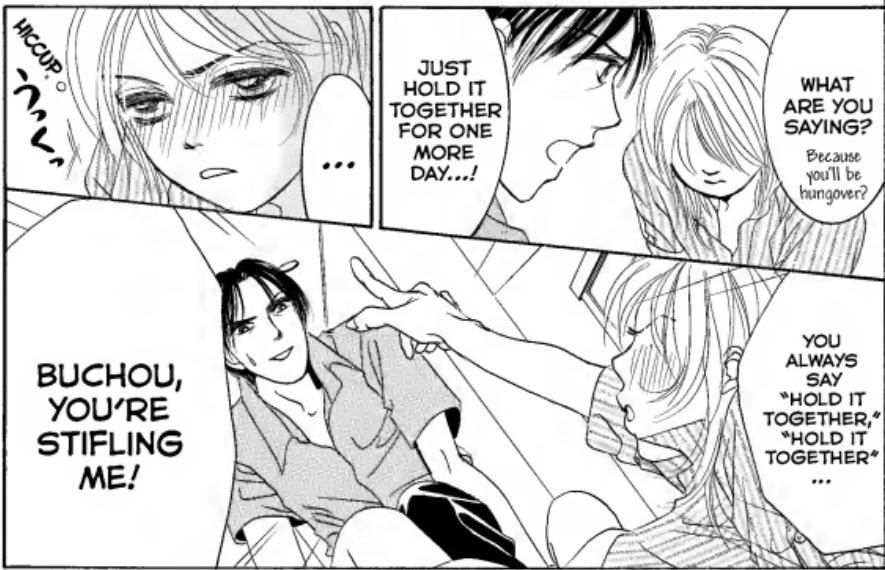
I'M
SORRY.

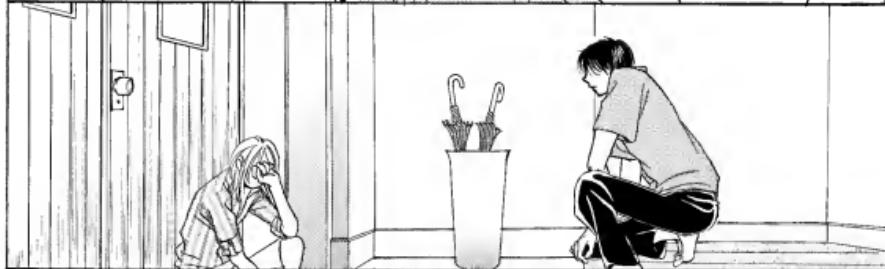
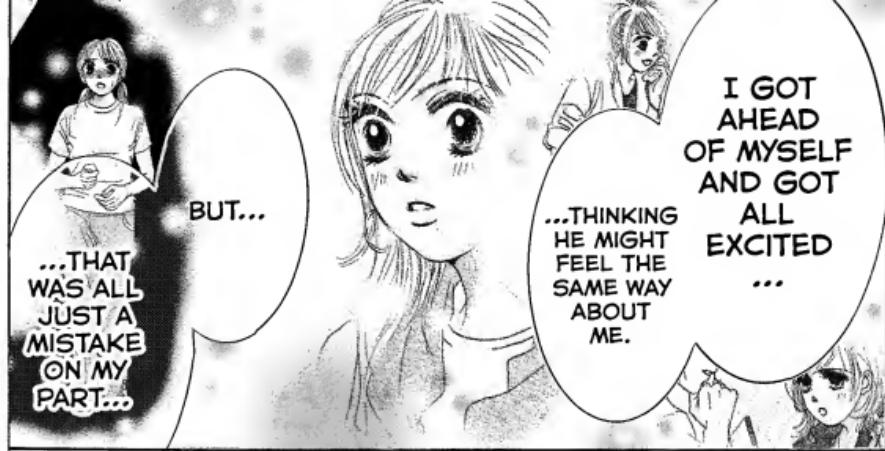
I'M
SLAMMED
WITH WORK
RIGHT NOW
...SO I
DON'T
THINK I'LL
BE ABLE
TO MAKE
IT.

W-WILL
YOU BE
THERE
...?

AH...







BUT...

WOULD IT
BE SO WRONG
TO CONFESS
YOUR FEEL-
INGS TO HIM?

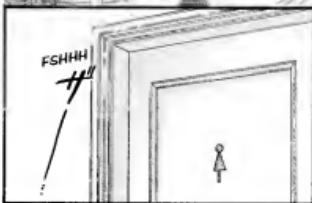
...U-
USUALLY
ADULTS
RELY ON THE
ATMOSPHERE
AND A
NATURAL
FLOW TO
MAKE THE
OTHER
PERSON
REALIZE
HOW THEY
FEEL...

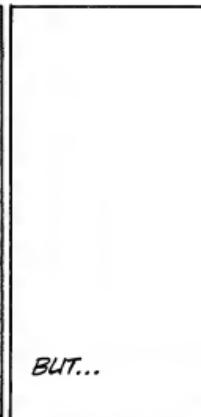
YOU
THINK
SO?

IF YOU
DON'T
TELL
SOMEONE
HOW YOU
FEEL,
THEY'LL
NEVER
KNOW.
NO
MATTER
WHAT AGE
YOU ARE,
THAT NEVER
CHANGES.

C-
I JUST
TOLD YOU
TO HIM
I'VE NEVER
...?!
DOEAT,
DIDN'T
I...?!

...
WHAAAT?





FLUSH

スリッターノン
SLIP

スリッターノン
SKID

...BUT
AFTER
ALL...

...YEAH.

A-ARE
YOU
OKAY?

THE CONCERT
SHOULD BE
STARTING SOON,
RIGHT?
THEY
CAME
ALL THE
WAY
FROM
L.A.
TODAY!

CHATTER

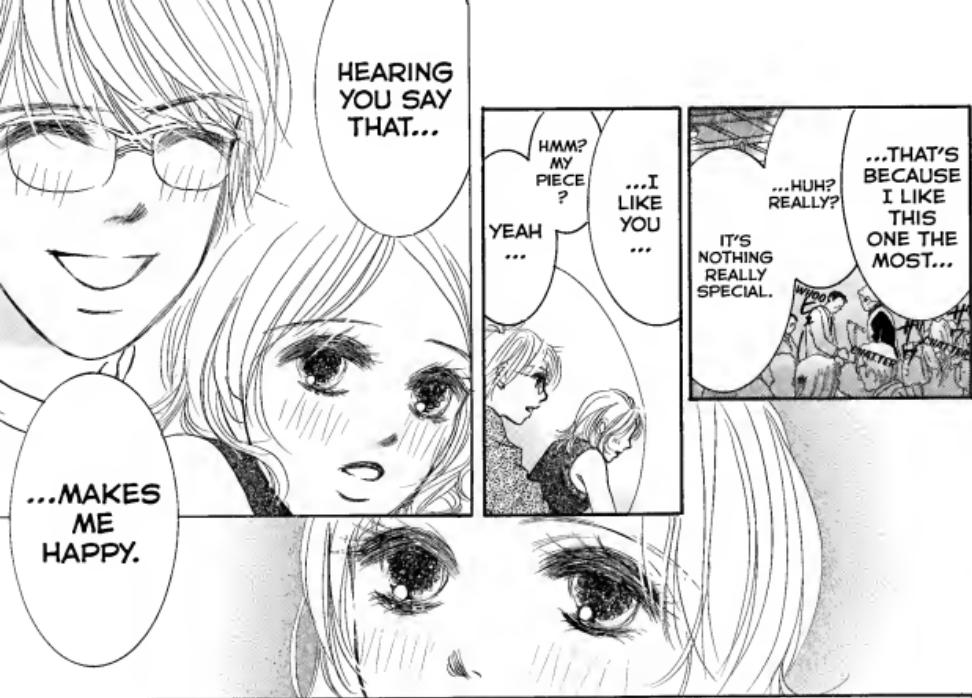
YOU...
TOOK
GREAT
CARE IN
POLISHING
THIS CHAIR,
RIGHT?

THANK
YOU
FOR
THAT.

UM...

カ



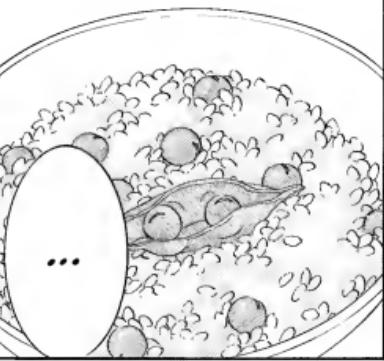
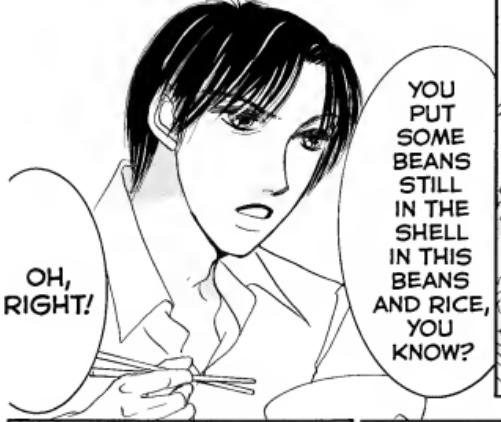






TRUTHFULLY, I CAN'T
REMEMBER MUCH OF
WHAT HE SAID.





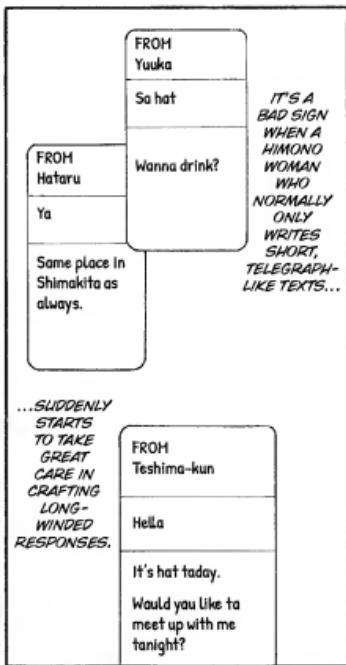


Hotaru's Way ★ LIGHT 3

Himono's Major Dating Strategy

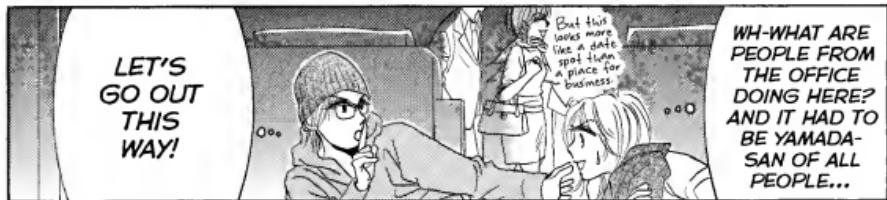


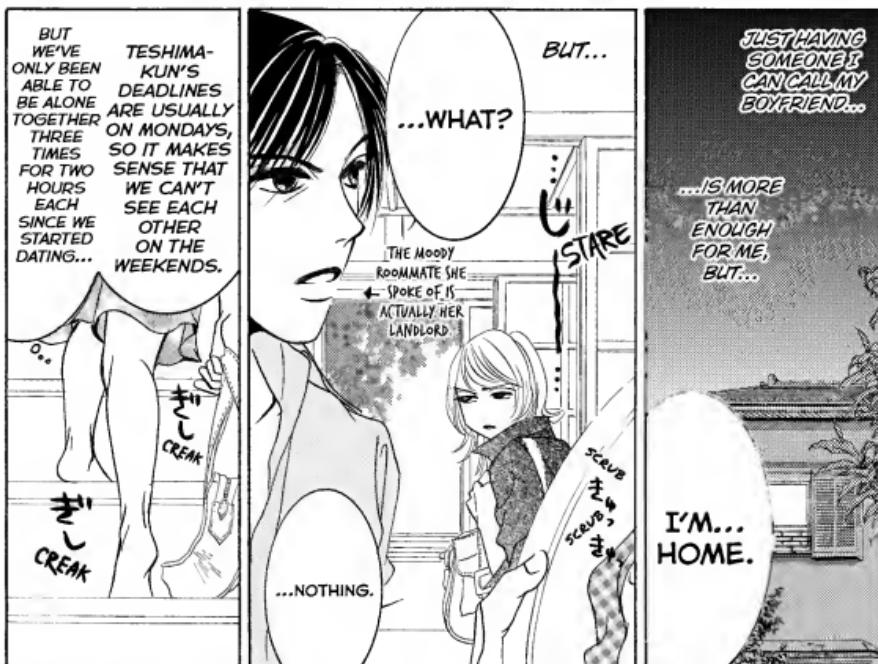
Hataru
RE: Hella
Thanks for texting me. Didn't you tell me that your deadline is coming up soon? It's okay... My job... Tonight at seven, I'm... Oh, that reminds me, on TV last night... But...

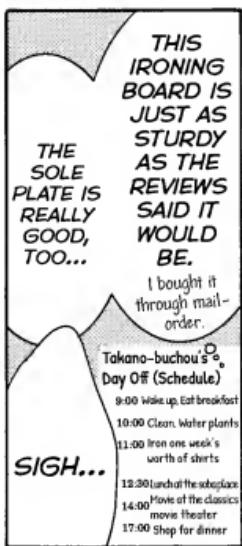
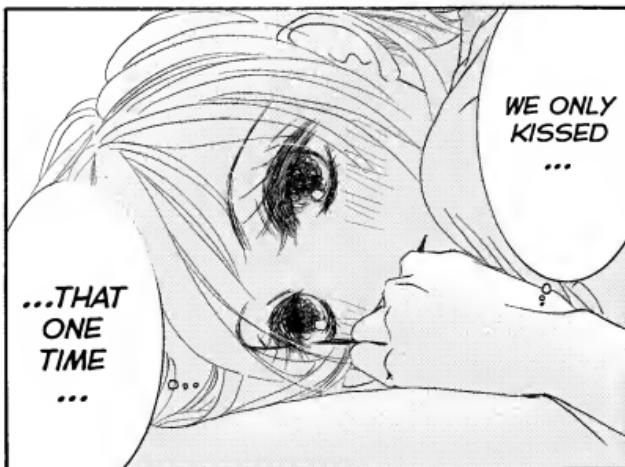


ALWAYS FLOATING ABOUT FIVE CENTIMETERS ABOVE THE GROUND.









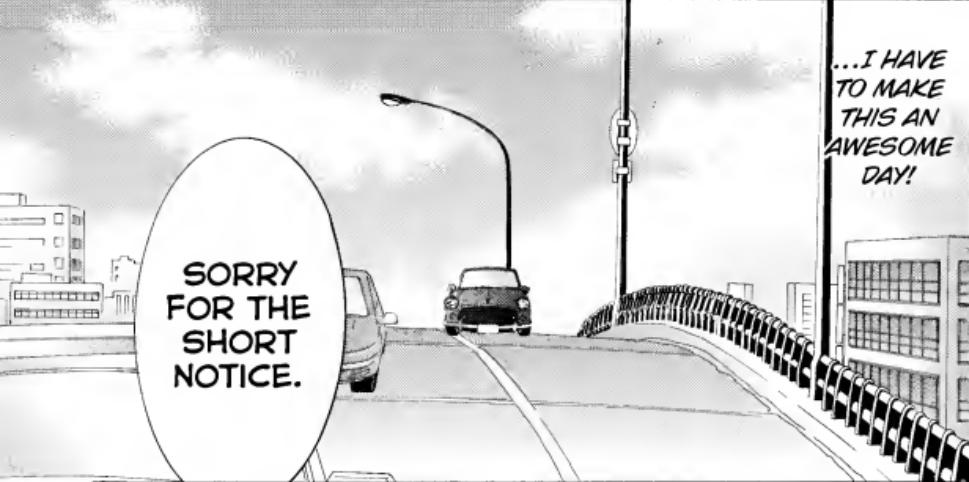


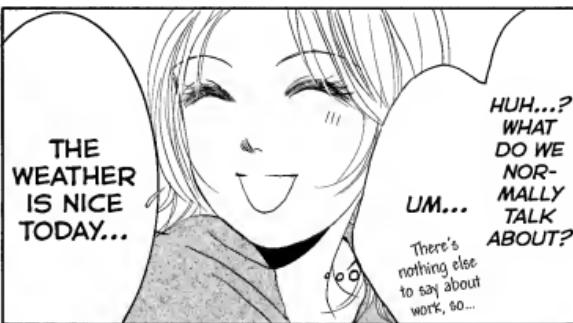




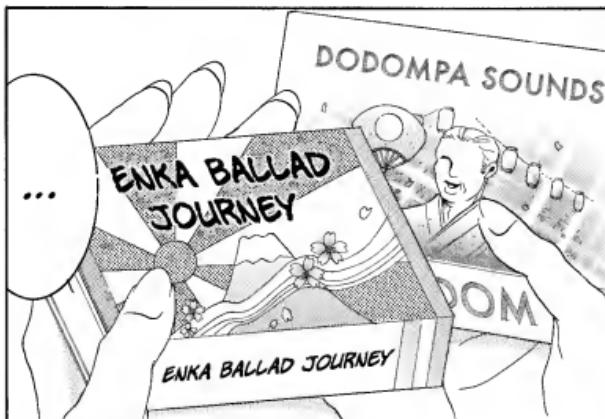


"himono" also means "dried fish".





I CAN'T
THINK OF
ANYTHING
TO START
A REAL
CONVERSA-
TION...!



NO,
THOSE
TAPES
PROBABLY
BELONG
TO MY
UNCLE.

MY
SPECIALTY
SONG AT
KARAOKE
IS ALWAYS
AMAGI-
GOE!

OH, DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT IT!
I'M A BIG
ENKA FAN,
TOO!

I-IT'S
FINE!
JUST
FORGET
I SAID
IT!

YOU
SING
AMAGI-
GOE...?

Isn't that
the one with
the kappo's
dance...?

SO I
BORROWED
MY
UNCLE'S.

SORRY, MY
REGULAR
CAR IS
A RUSTY
TRANSPORT
VEHICLE.

HUH...?

↑ GLENCHED FIST

↑ HAND STILL IN A FIST

WE'RE STUCK IN
A CAR TOGETHER...
THERE'S NOWHERE
TO RUN...!

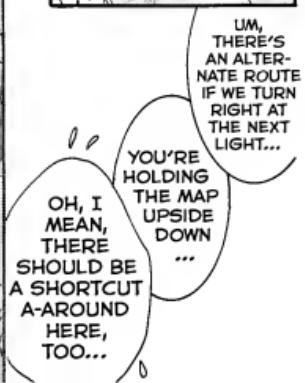
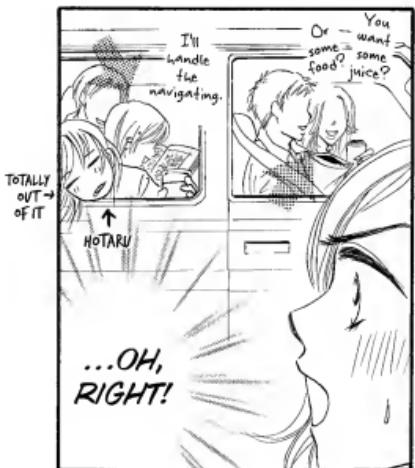
O-OH,
GOD,
MY HEAD
FEELS
LIKE IT'S
SPINNING
...

I-I'VE GOT
TO COME UP
WITH SOME TOPIC
WE CAN GET
EXCITED ABOUT
TO TURN THIS
CONVERSATION
AROUND...!

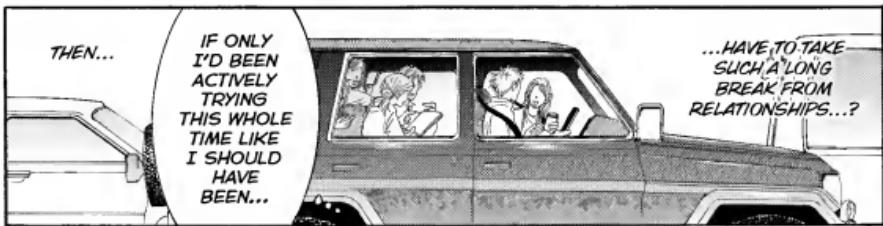
...IS TOO
HIGH LEVEL
FOR A
HIMONO
WOMAN
LIKE ME!

A
DRIVING
DATE...

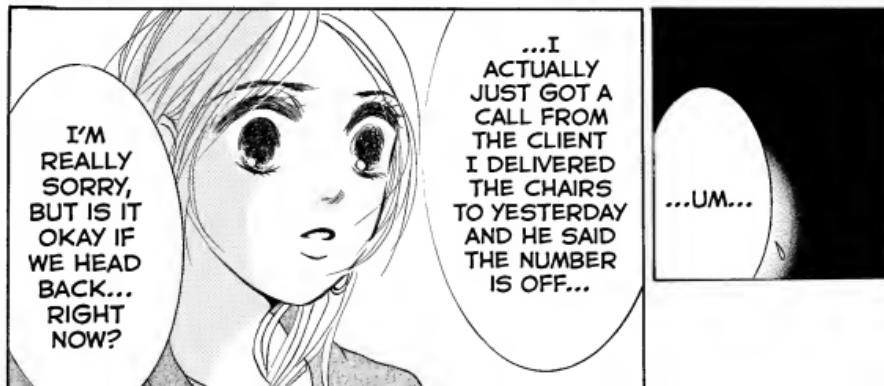
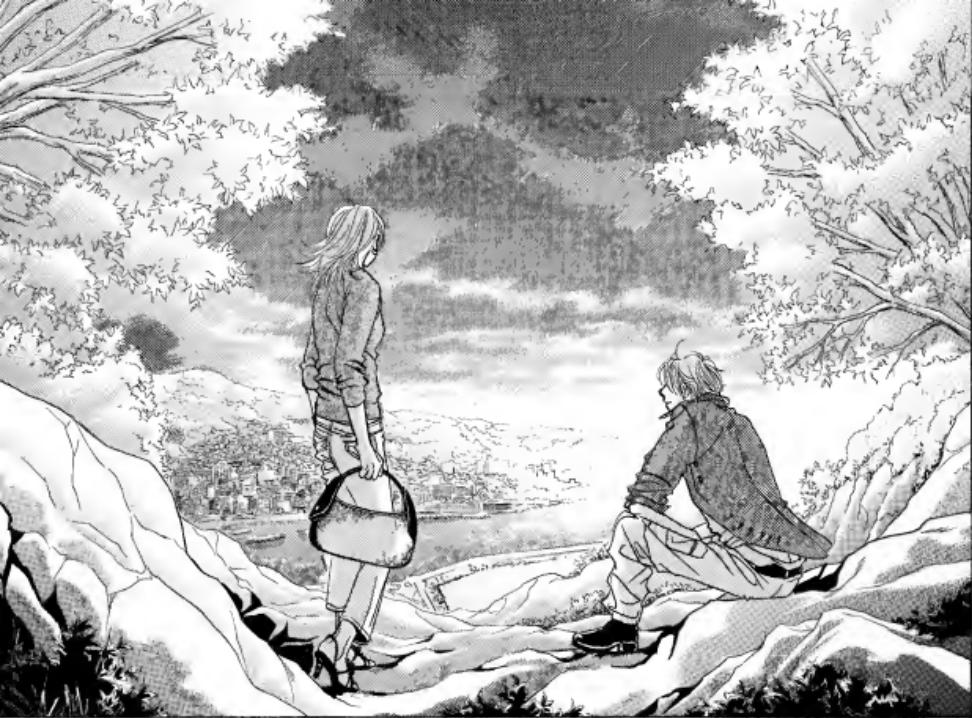










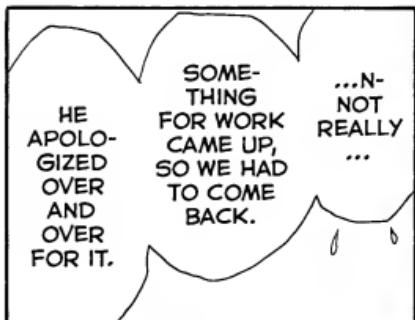




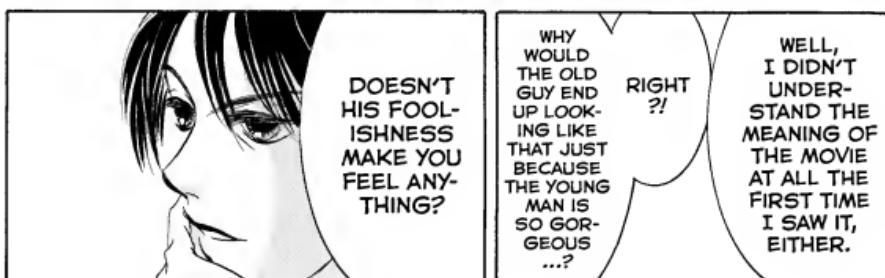
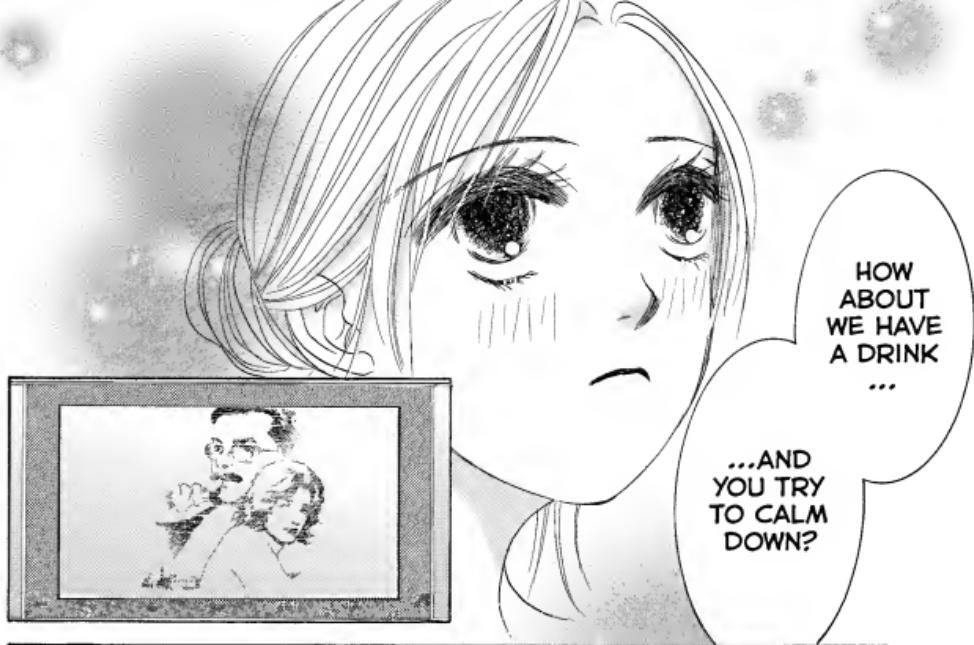


Fan: Himono









HE MAY HAVE LOOKED RIDICULOUS, BUT...



THAT OLD MAN WAS HAPPY ALL THE WAY UNTIL THE MOMENT HE DIED.

...WHEN YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE?

...ISN'T THAT WHAT IT'S LIKE...

AT LEAST IN YOUR CASE, YOU'RE LUCKY ENOUGH THAT YOUR PARTNER AT LEAST ACKNOWLEDGES YOU SOMEWHAT.

...ARE YOU SAYING THAT I'M THE SAME AS THE CHUBBY OLD GUY ...?







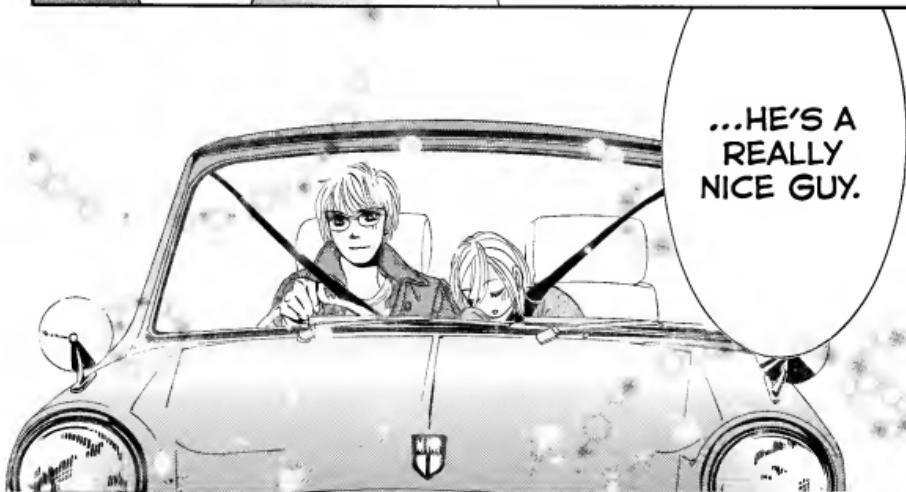
BUT EVEN SO, HE POWERED THROUGH AND DRANK HALF OF IT FOR ME.



BUT...

I KEPT READING INTO IT AND GETTING MORE AND MORE FREAKED OUT.

HE KEPT SIGHING IN THE CAR.



...HE'S A REALLY NICE GUY.

...HE FOUND A SPOT WITH A REALLY NICE VIEW.

WHEN WE TOOK A SLIGHT DETOUR...



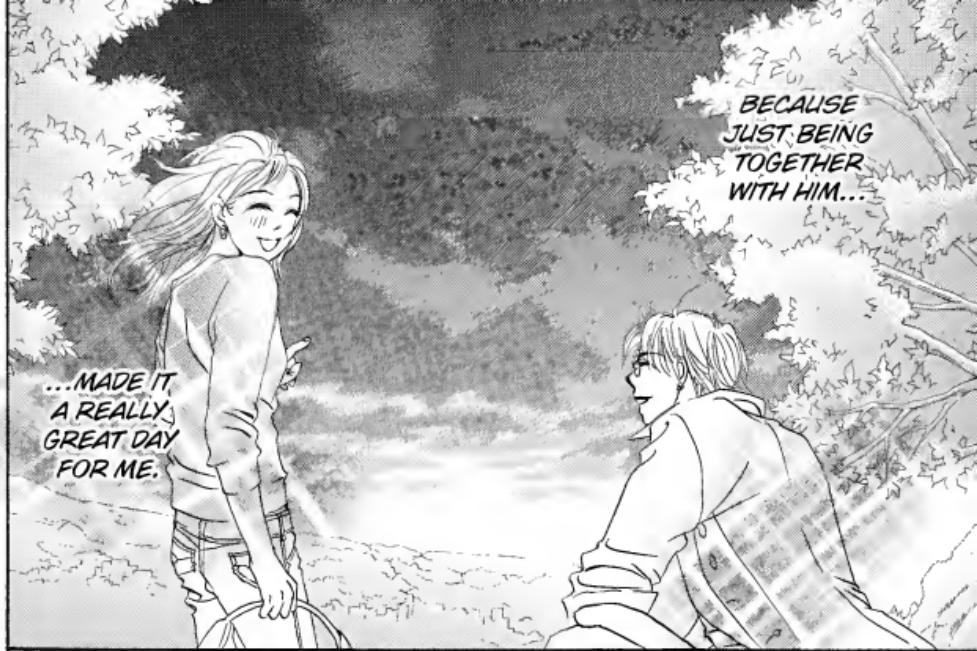
...UNTIL THE SUN WENT DOWN.

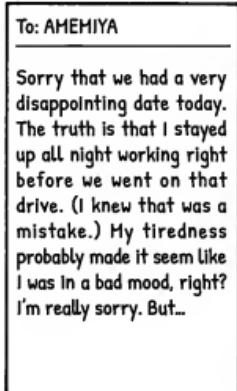
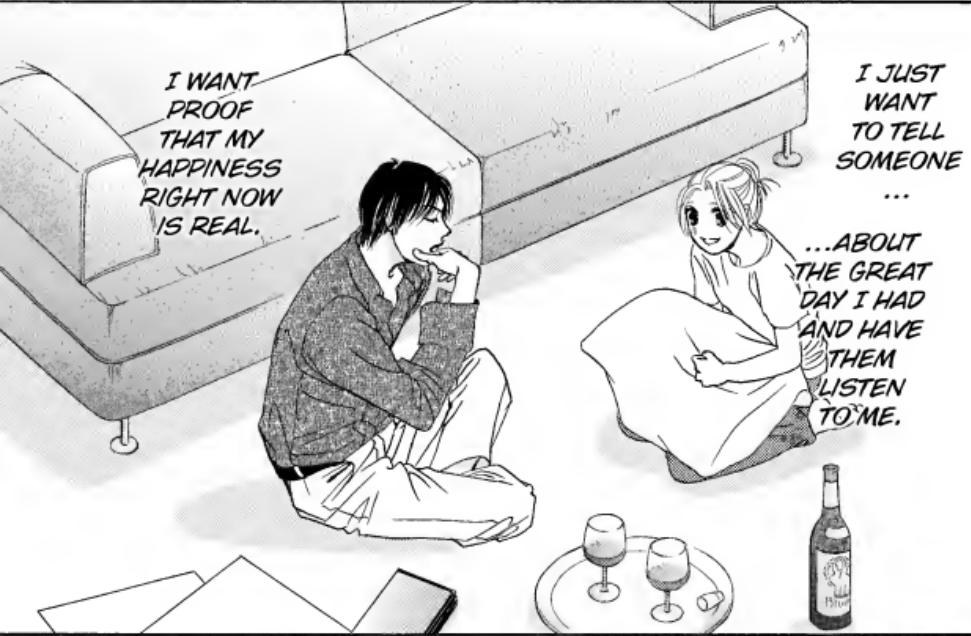
I WANTED TO STARE AT THAT VIEW...



I WAS SO MISERABLE AND EMBARRASSED...

...THAT I COULDN'T EVEN RAISE MY HEAD.





But I wanted to see you no matter what.



Paradise Ginga is a song by the boy band Hikaru Genji from the late eighties to nineties! Shakariki Columbus is a line from Paradise Ginga.



Hotaru's Way ★ LIGHT 4

Himono's Stormy Night





WHAT ARE YOU DOING, DRESSED LIKE THAT?

WHEN I THINK ABOUT THAT NOW...



...N-NO, THANK YOU, I'M FINE...

ARE YOU GOING TO PUT ONE ON, TOO? THE SECURITY GUARD AT WORK HANDED THEM OUT.

Takanobu's handkerchiefs are always perfectly ironed flat. His wife really pays attention to detail.

BUT I KIND OF LIKE KNOWING ABOUT HIS SECRET SIDE...

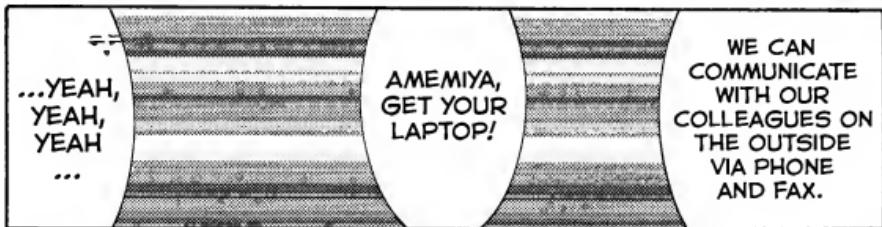
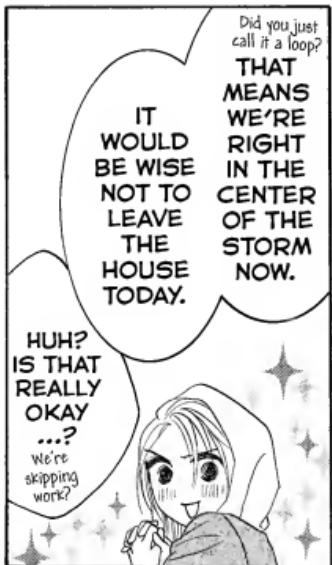
I'D LOVE FOR THE PEOPLE AT THE OFFICE TO SEE HOW HE REALLY IS.

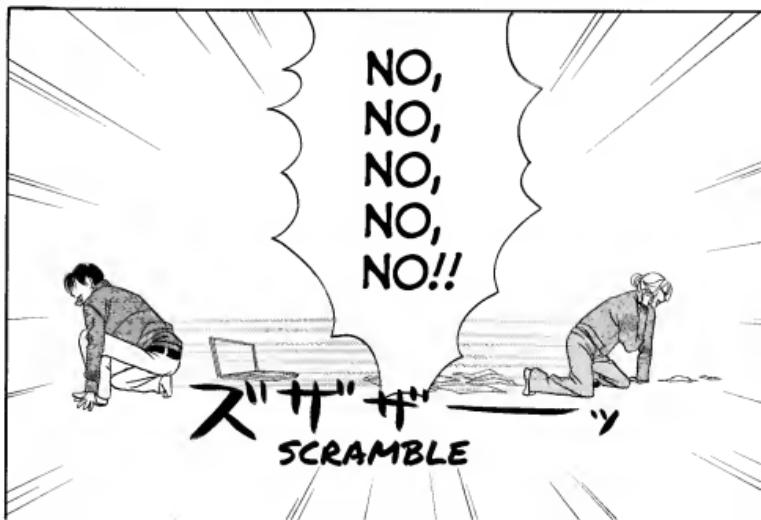
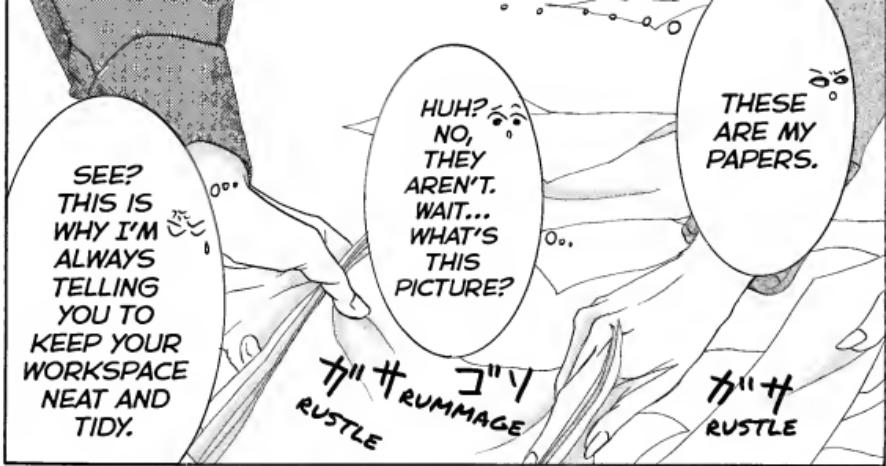
GOD, THAT OLD MAN IS SUCH A WORRY-WART.

My stomach hurts from laughing...

HIMONO DON'T REALLY CARE IF THEIR SKIRTS GET BLOWN UP. ↑



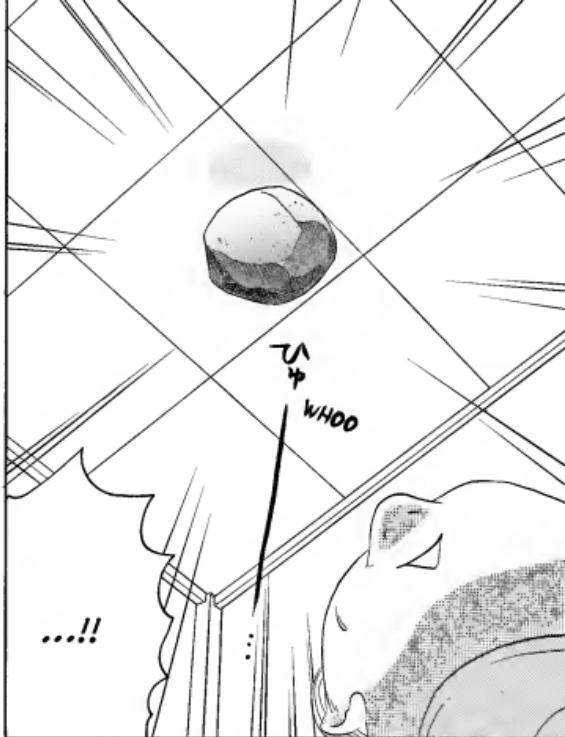




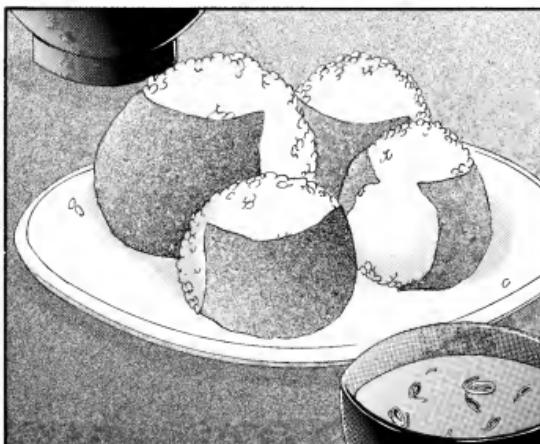














OH/ STUFF
LIKE THAT
CAN HAPPEN
EVEN TO AN
EXCESSIVE
PLANNER
LIKE YOU
...!

YEAH, THAT'S
RIGHT. I
HAD JUST
BOUGHT A
MOUNTAIN
OF FROZEN
FOOD THAT
DAY...IT WAS
TERRIBLE
TIMING...

OH...
YEAH,
THERE
WAS.

I
COULDN'T
WATCH TV
OR TURN
ON THE
AIR
CONDITONER.

WE HAD
A TYPHOON
AROUND
THIS TIME
LAST YEAR,
AND THE
POWER WAS
OUT FOR
SUCH A
LONG TIME,
REMEMBER
?



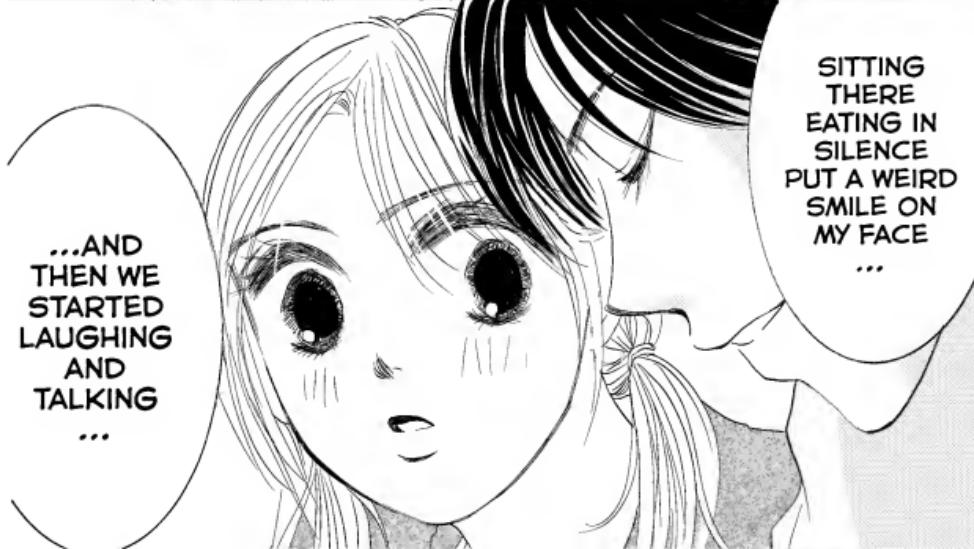
IT WAS
A REALLY
STRANGE
NIGHT...

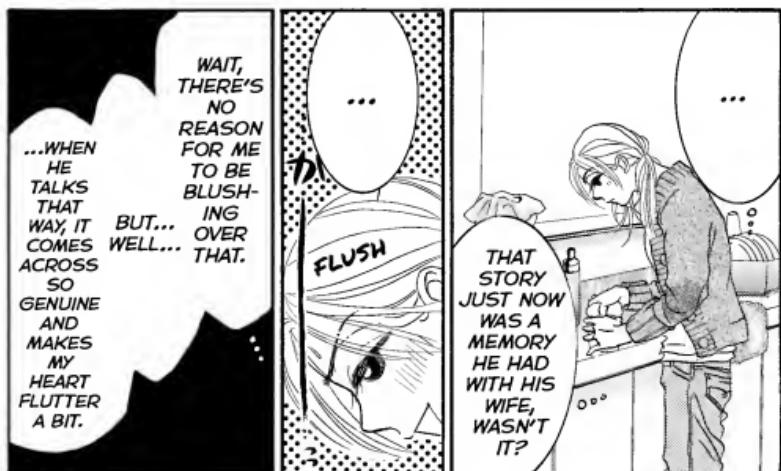
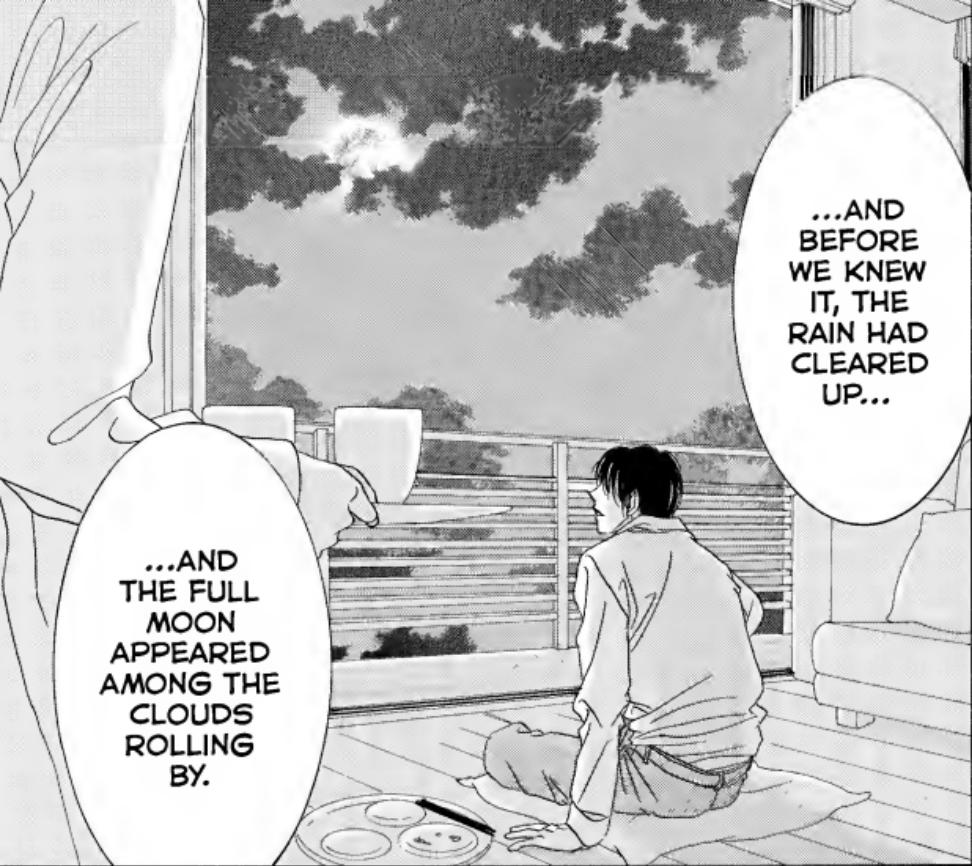
WHOA.

YEAH...
SO I GOT
DESPERATE
AND
COOKED
EVERY-
THING.

...AND
THEN WE
STARTED
LAUGHING
AND
TALKING

SITTING
THERE
EATING IN
SILENCE
PUT A WEIRD
SMILE ON
MY FACE





TAKANO-
BUCHOU...

AND
YET HE
SNEEZES
LIKE AN
OLD
GEEZER
...



...LIVED WITH
THE WOMAN
HE LOVED.

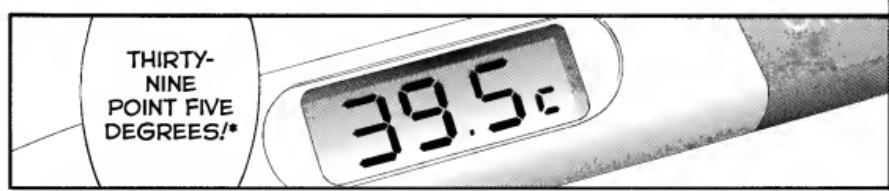


...I'LL
PUT IT
HERE
FOR
YOU
...

WHAT
THE
HELL?
IS HE
IGNORING
ME? IS
HE JUST
REALLY
INTO THAT
MOVIE?

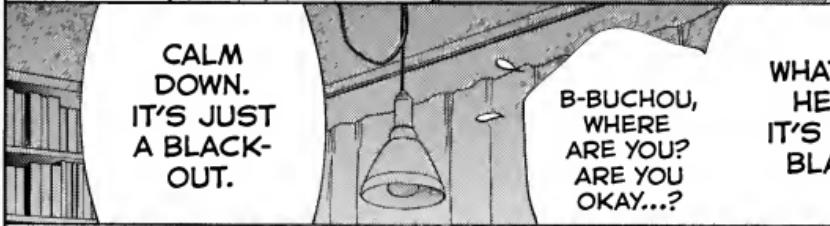
DO YOU
WANT
SOME?

...BUCHOU,
I MADE
COFFEE.



* about 103 degrees Fahrenheit.







...THAT
TAKANO-
BUCHOU...

...WAS
SUCH A
RESTLESS
OLD MAN.

...

CLINK

CLINK

FWOOSH

CLINK
CLINK

...OH,
NO!
I FELL
ASLEEP!
What time is it?

BEFORE
WE KNEW IT,
THE RAIN HAD
CLEARED UP...

...AND THE
FULL MOON—
APPEARED
AMONG THE
CLOUDS,
ROLLING BY.



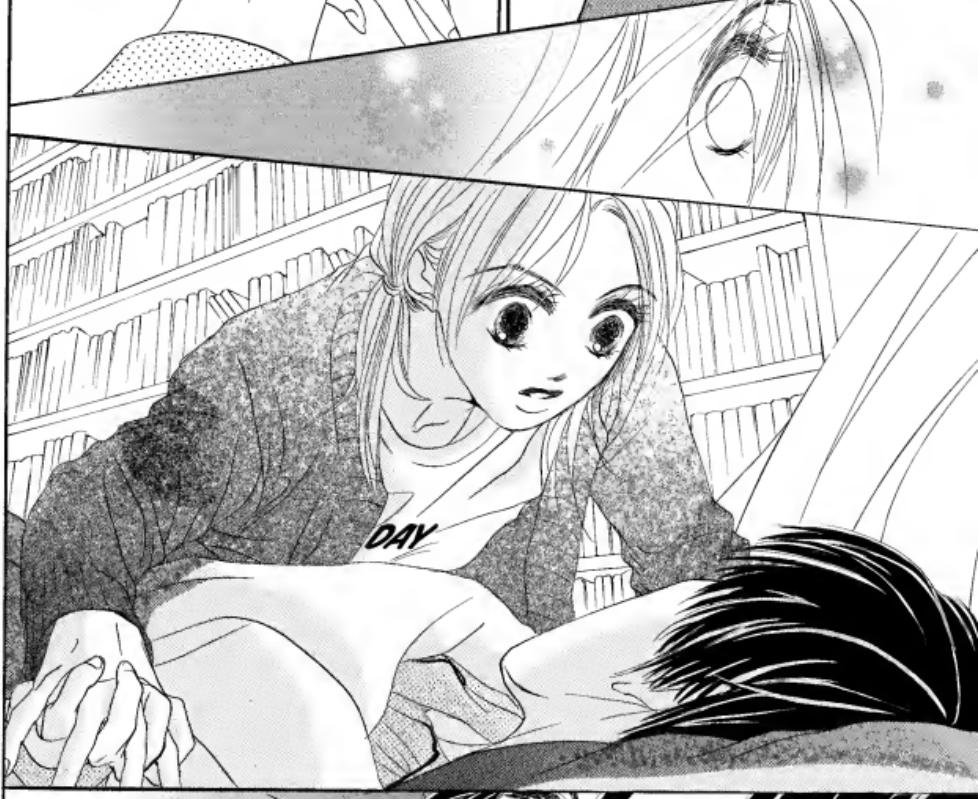


HUH?

D-DID
I WAKE
YOU?

HOW'S
YOUR
FEVER
...?

...B-BU-
CHOU?



DAY



...YOU
...CAME
HOME.







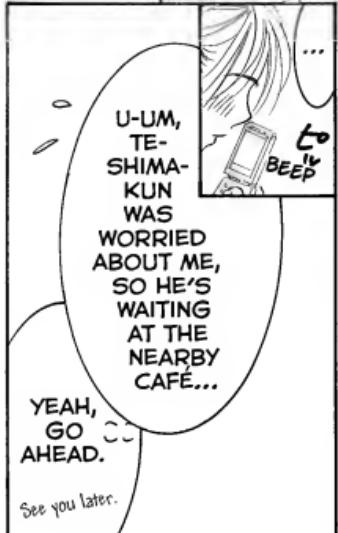
NO, NO,
NO, NO,
NO!





RING RING RING

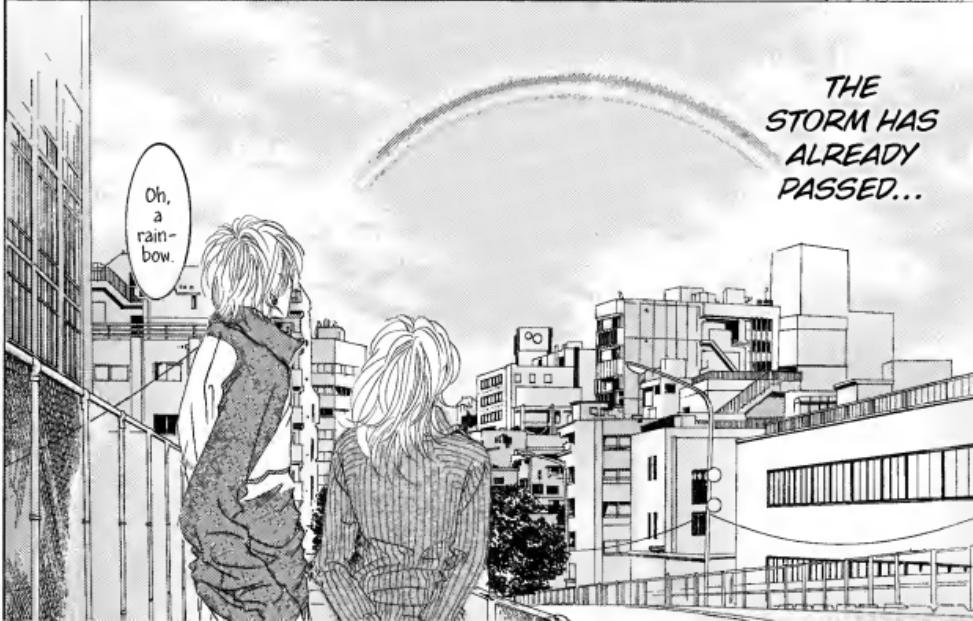
RING RING RING





The izayoi moon appears on the sixteenth day of the lunar cycle. It's the night right after the full moon.





Beloved Himono Status Check!

- ① When having a simple meal, you eat it standing in the kitchen.
- ② Recently, the only time your heartbeat speeds up is when you walk up a flight of stairs.
- ③ On the rare occasion that you do go to a singles mixer, it almost always ends up more like a night out drinking.
- ④ You're prone to having stupid arguments with yourself out loud.
- ⑤ You've tried to engage in talk about love, but you were told, "That's so old!"

- If you said yes to more than three, watch yourself. *
- If you said yes to all five, you're going to grow a mustache.

→ If you want a more in-depth test, go to page 190!



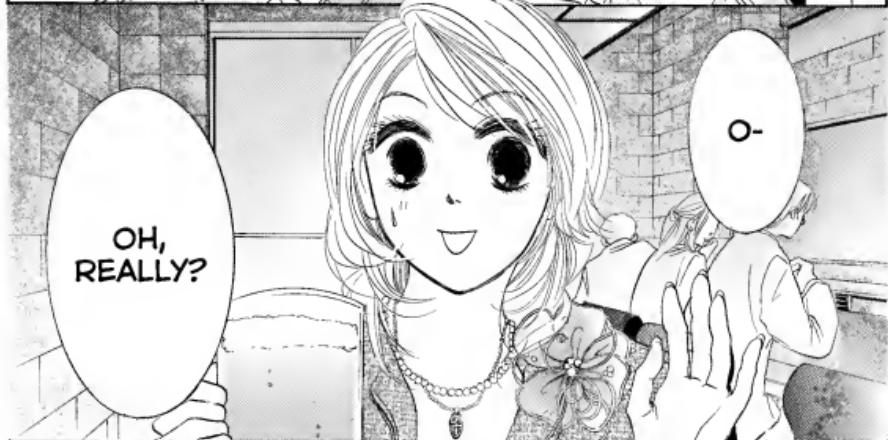


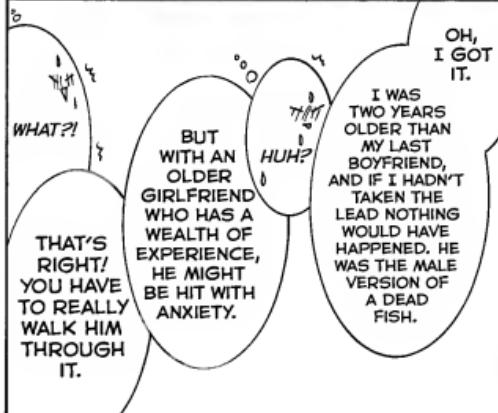
I NEED ADVICE
FROM THE MILLIONS
OF PEOPLE ALL
OVER JAPAN WHO
ARE ROMANTICALLY
INCLINED.

AFTER FIVE
YEARS OF HIMONO
LIFESTYLE, I'VE
SUDDENLY FOUND
MYSELF WITH A
BOYFRIEND.

HOW DO
YOU GET
OVER...

...THE
AWKWARD
MOMENT
AFTER YOU
KISS?







I'LL GIVE
HIM A
LESSON
ON SEX.
♥

NIMONO GONE ROGUE

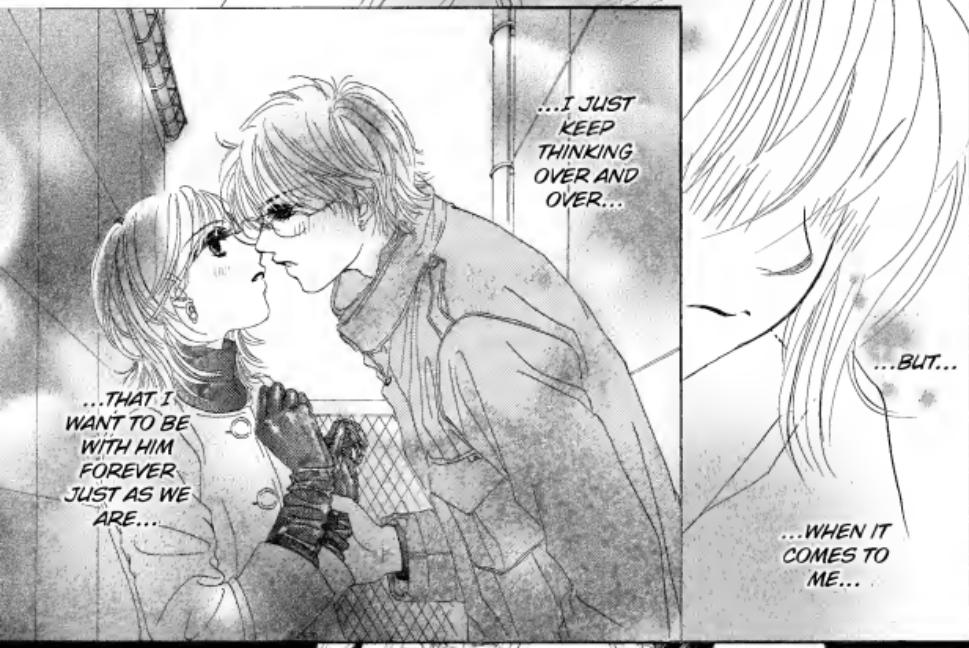
SOON!
MY MOST
RECENT
MEMORIES!

DEFINITELY NOT FROM THIS CENTURY.

I'M THE
ONE WHO
NEEDS TO
LEARN!

OH GOD,
I COULD
NEVER!







HE'S IN A GOOD MOOD BECAUSE TOMORROW IS PAYDAY AND THE START OF A LONG HOLIDAY.

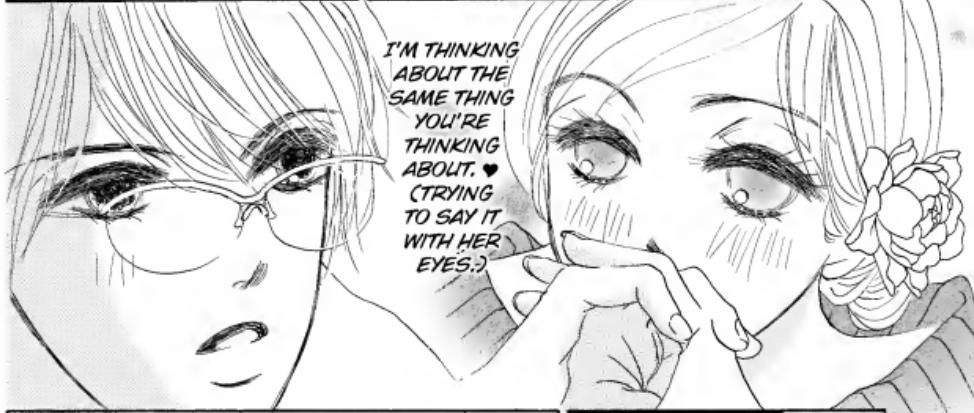


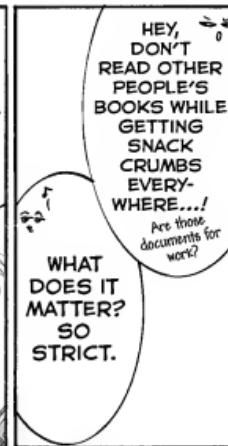
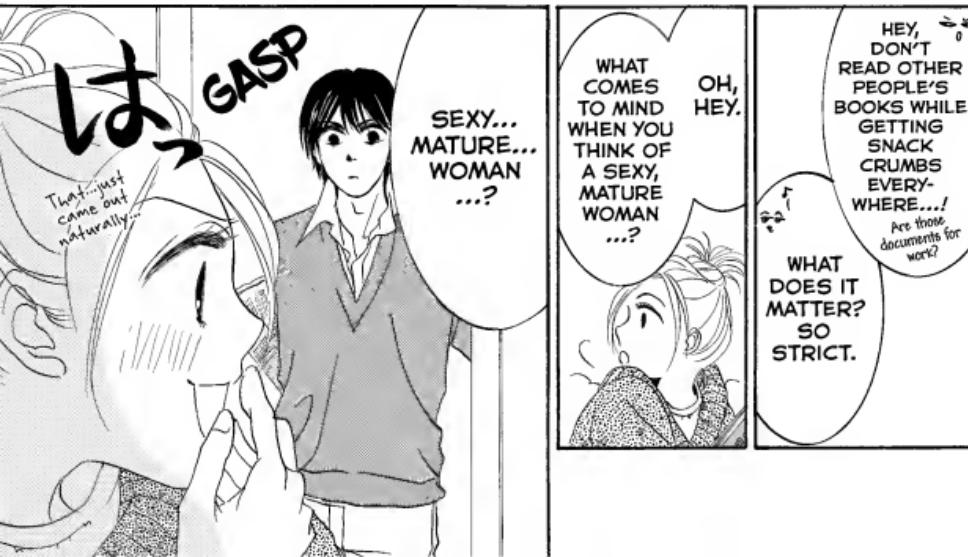


...THOUGHT
ABOUT
HIM AS AN
ACTUAL MAN
BEFORE.

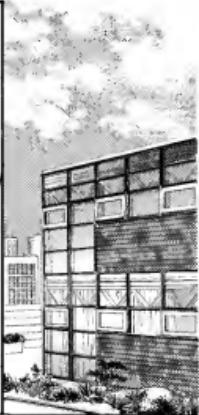
I'VE
NEVER, IN
A MILLION
YEARS...

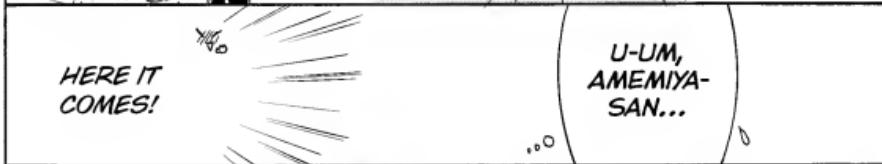






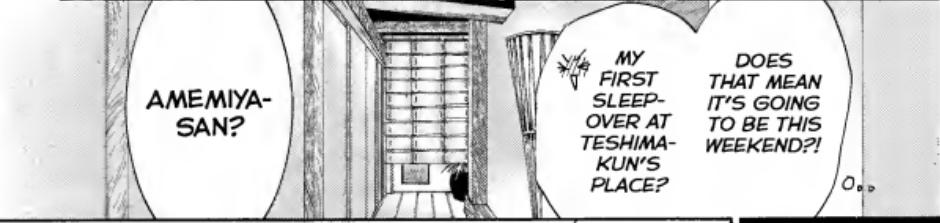
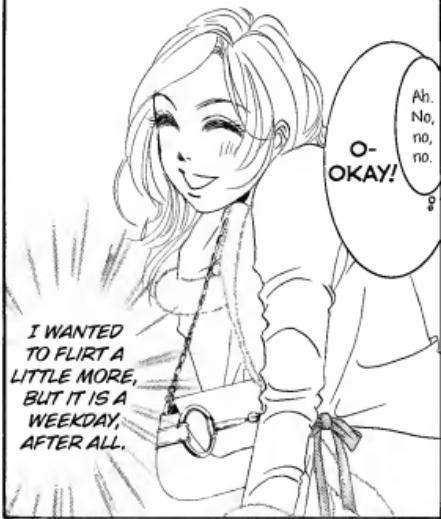


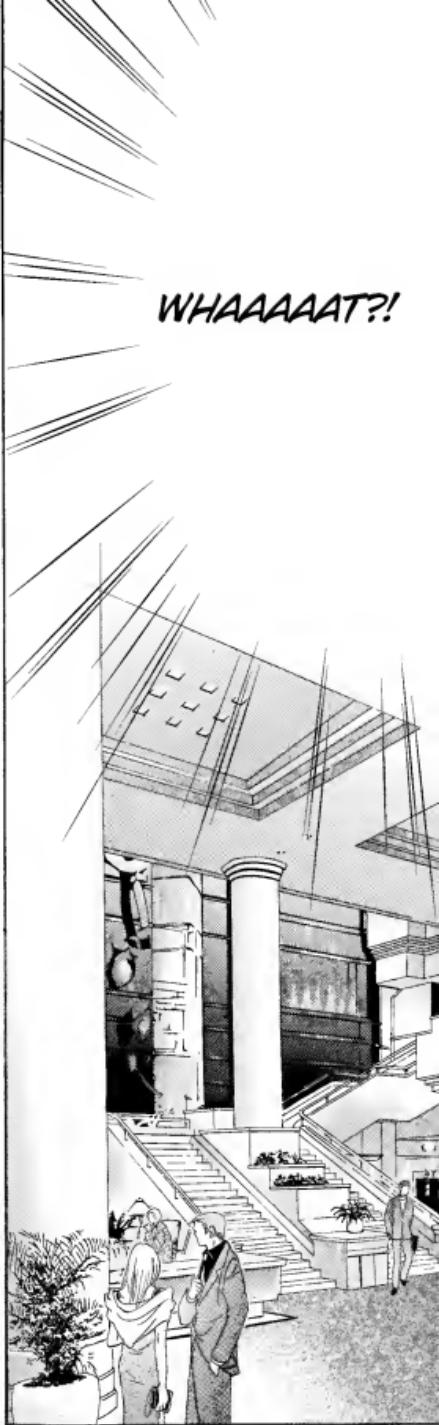


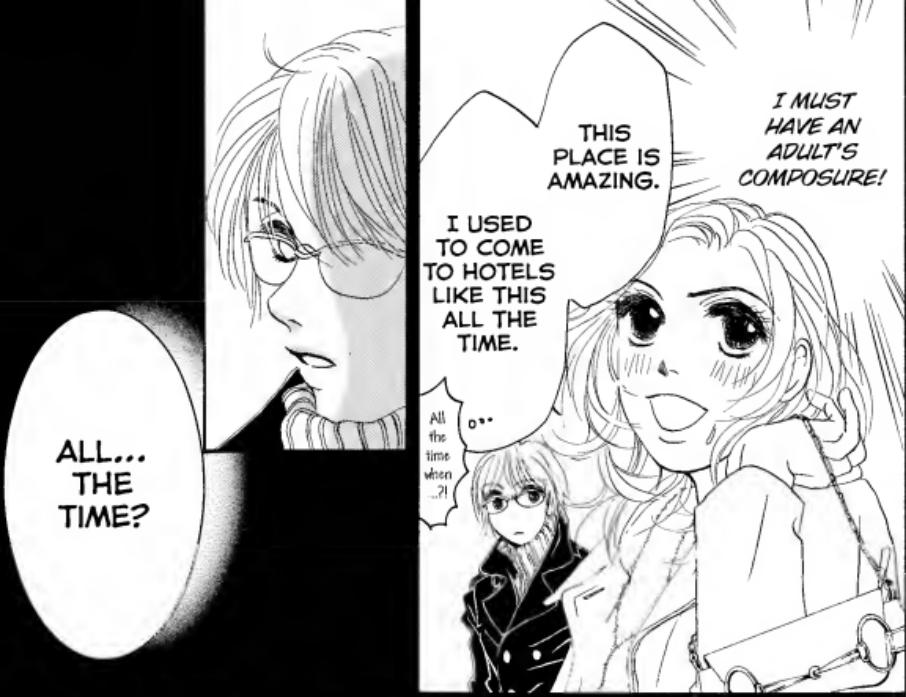














NOW THAT
I'M ON
THE LIST,
WE HAVE
ENOUGH
FOR A
BASEBALL
TEAM...

Slide

NO
WAAAAY!

OP...

FLUSH

...
OH.
I-I
SURE
AM.

I THINK
YOU'RE
HOLDING
IT UPSIDE
DOWN.

EVEN
THOUGH
I'M THREE
YEARS
OLDER!

EVEN
THOUGH
I TRIED SO
HARD THAT I
DON'T HAVE
ANY MORE
TO GIVE...

J-JUST AS I
SUSPECTED,
TESHIMA-KUN
IS A MUCH
HIGHER LEVEL
THAN ME....!

In the game
of love...!

...ANYONE
WOULD BE
SHOCKED
BY THAT...

I MEAN...



I WANT
TO GO
HOME...

I HATE
THIS...

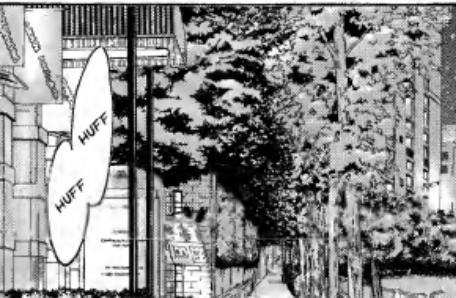


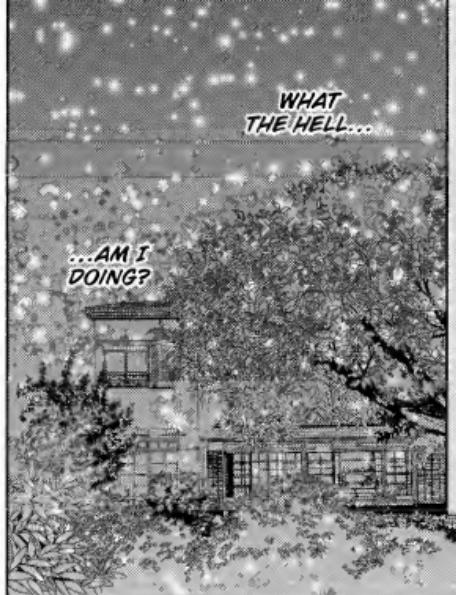


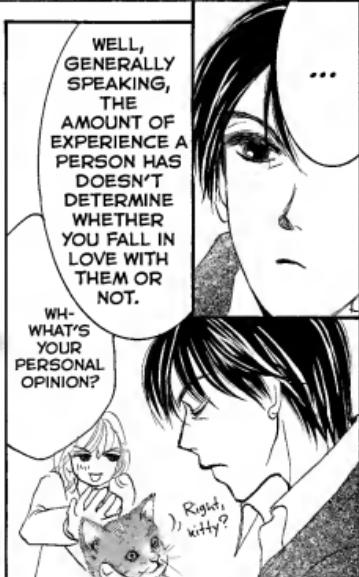
SHOVE



* The word for octopus and the word for callus are the same in Japanese. So when Hotaru says her calluses hurt, Teshima thinks she said her octopus hurts.







IF SOME-
ONE
THINKS
"IS THAT
ALL?"
ABOUT A
GUY EVEN
ONCE, HE
MIGHT
NEVER
RECOVER.

WHAT?
IS THAT
REALLY
TRUE?

IN ANY
CASE, MEN
ARE MORE
LIKELY THE
ONES TO
PUT ON AN
ACT IN
SITUATIONS
LIKE THAT.

I DON'T
THINK I'D
BE DISAP-
POINTED.



I—I see.
So he was just
exaggerating
the truth
earlier.

And the
baseball team
numbers,
worthy...
too, probably...

O-
OH.

YOU DIDN'T
KNOW? MEN
ARE NINETY-
TWO PERCENT
MEANING-
LESS PRIDE.

WH-WHAT
IS THAT
SUP-
POSED
TO MEAN?

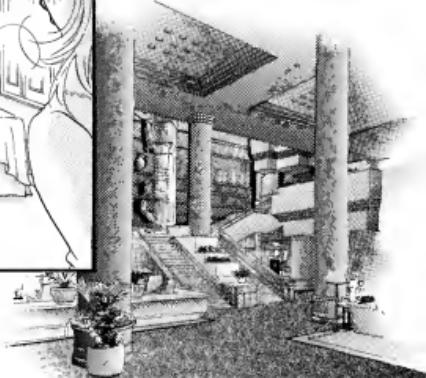
THERE'S
NO NEED
TO GO SO
CRAZY THAT
YOU END
UP FILLING
THE BATH-
ROOM WITH
BLOOD.

HUH?

...A
YOUNGER
BOYFRIEND
WOULD HAVE
THE RIGHT
BALANCE
BECAUSE SHE
WOULD ACT
YOUNGER THAN
HER AGE,
RIGHT?

WELL,
FOR SOME-
ONE WHO
STAGNATED
IN HER
HIMONO-
NESS FOR
SO LONG
...





I'M
OLDER
THAN
YOU...

CAN I
TELL YOU
SOMETHING
REALLY
LAME?

...I'M
SORRY,
TOO.
I GOT
CAUGHT
UP IN THE
ATMO-
SPHERE.

U-U-M...
I ONLY
KNOW
SOMEONE
AT THIS
HOTEL
THROUGH
A WORK
CONNEC-
TION...

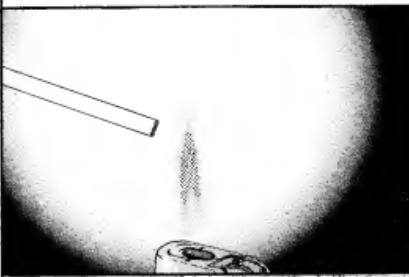
It stays
fresh in my
mind because
we joked that
one more and
he'd have a
baseball team.
So I just
pulled it out
of my brain.

...BUT
I-I'M
STILL
SCARED
ABOUT
WHAT
MIGHT
HAPPEN
TONIGHT.

I'M
SCARED
ABOUT A
LOT OF
THINGS
...

I'M
YOUNGER
THAN
YOU...

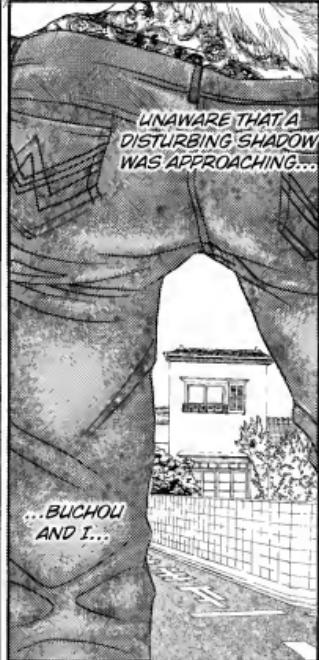
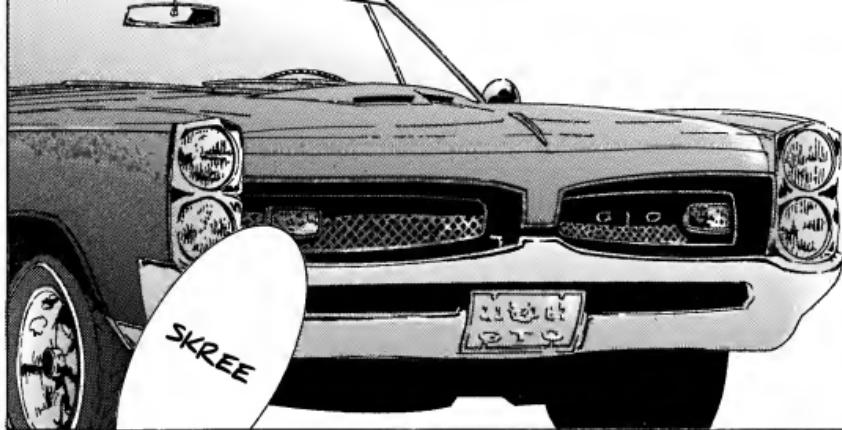
THEN
CAN I
ASK YOU
FOR
SOM-
ETHING
SELFISH?

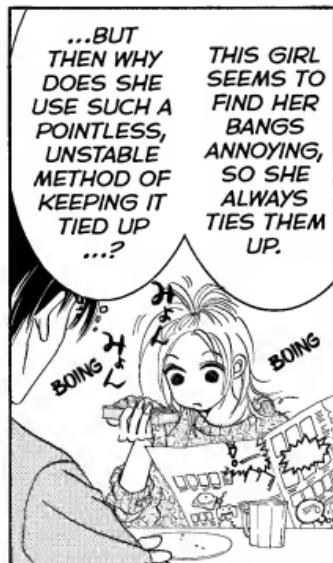


...IF I
START
CALLING
YOU
HOTARU?

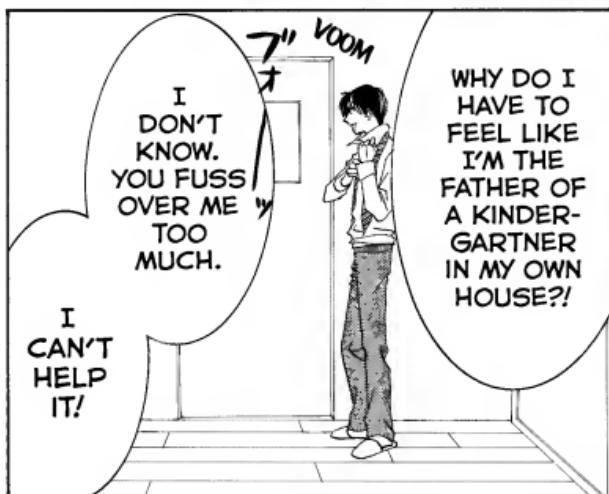




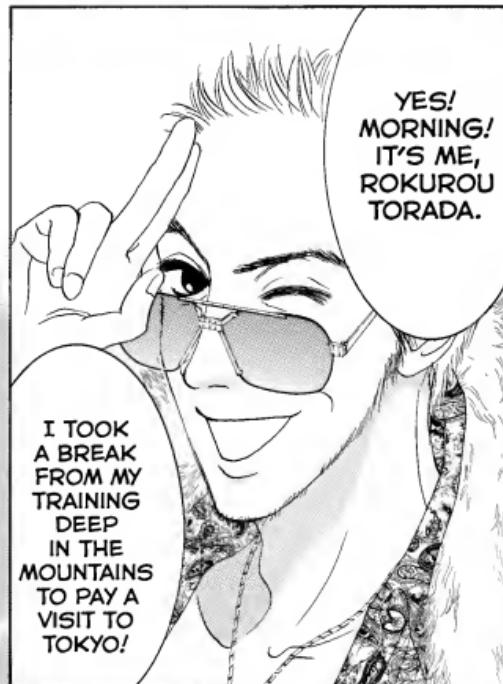




TAKANO-BUCHOU'S DISCOVERING NOTARU'S MYSTERIES







...STARTED AT THE COMPANY AT THE SAME TIME AS TAKANO-BUCHOU.

BUT THEN TWO YEARS AGO, HE SUDDENLY LEFT THE CITY AND MARRIED THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF A SAKE BREWERY IN ANOTHER PREFECTURE WHOSE FAMILY ACCEPTED HIM WHOLE-HEARTEDLY...

What interests me now? Nature... the great outdoors

HE SUDDENLY TURNED INTO THE OUTDOORS TYPE...

WE WORKED IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY AND WAS ALWAYS ATTENDING PARTIES WITH MODELSQUE BEAUTIES ON HIS ARM...

BUT HE WENT INDEPENDENT RIGHT AWAY AND HAD A LOT OF INFLUENCE IN THE EIGHTIES AND NINETIES AS A PRODUCER (?) OF SPACES.

IT'S BORING ME OUT OF MY SKULL!!

REACTIVE TYPE →

THERE'S SERIOUSLY NOT A DAMN THING IN THE PREFECTURE I LIVE IN NOW.

...FOR REAL? THE TRUTH IS JUST THAT AMEMIYA-CHAN COULDN'T AFFORD TO MOVE SO YOU'RE LIVING TOGETHER AS REGULAR ROOM-MATES?

IT'S TRUE! BESIDES ...

YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG!!

I NEVER IMAGINED THAT SUPER SERIOUS SEIICHI WAS SUCH AN EXCITING PERSON AS TO BE SHACKING UP WITH HIS MISTRESS LADY...



BESIDES, DON'T THEY SAY THAT TOKYO'S ECONOMIC BUBBLE IS COMING BACK? IT'S GOT MY BLOOD PUMPING ALREADY!!

What about your love for nature?

It's not coming back really...

...WHEN I TOLD HIM I WAS SCARED ABOUT OUR FIRST NIGHT TOGETHER...

IT'S FINE. WE'LL JUST STAY LIKE THIS FOR TONIGHT ...

THAT'S RIGHT... I HAVE A LOVELY BOYFRIEND WHO SAID...

...I HAVE A BOYFRIEND I'M TOTALLY HEAD OVER HEELS FOR!

?

!...ARGH!

HIS ATTEMPT AT PILLOW TALK.

HOTARU-CHAN, YOUR SNORES SOUND LIKE YOU'RE SINGING. IT'S SO CUTE!

AND THEN I GOT TOO RELAXED AND FELL INTO A DEEP SLEEP.

SHORT

HEE HEE HEE

...WHAT ?!

YOU GUYS WOULDN'T MIND IF ONE MORE ROOMMATE WAS ADDED IN, RIGHT? SO, ANYWAY!

...YOU DON'T WANT PEOPLE AT THE COMPANY FINDING OUT ABOUT YOUR LIVING SITUATION, DO YOU?

REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THERE'S ANYTHING BETWEEN YOU TWO OR NOT...

OF COURSE WE'D MIND!

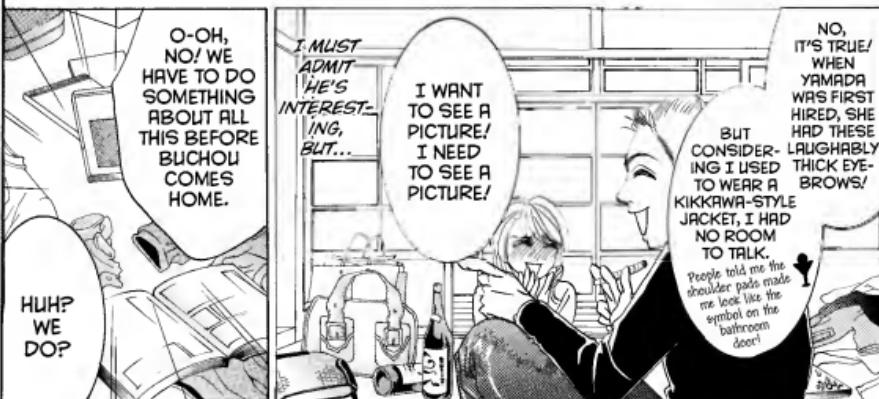
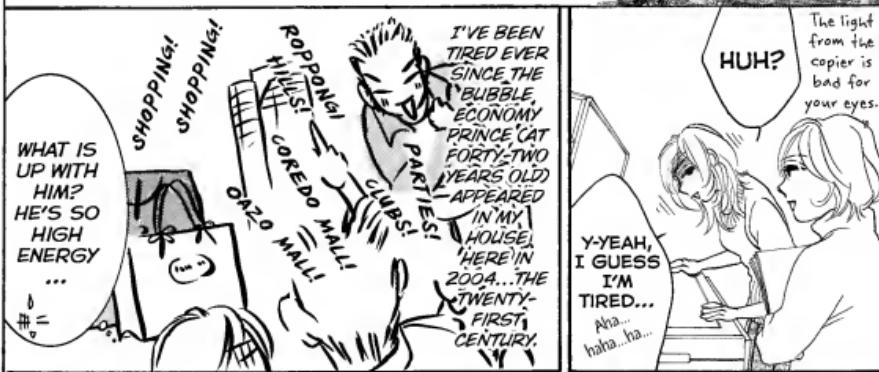
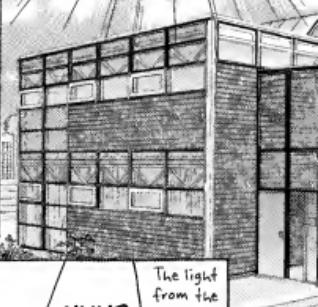
BUT I'VE GOT NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

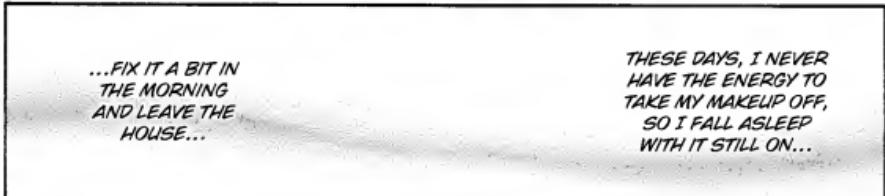
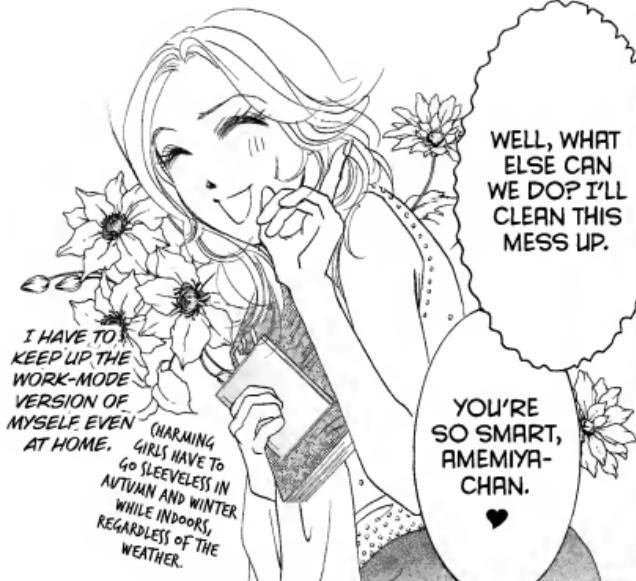
Get a hotel room!

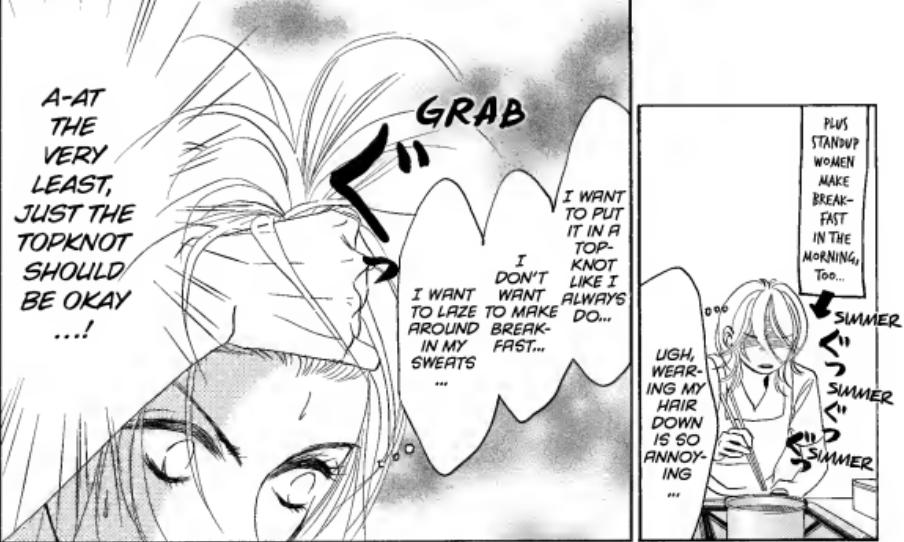
That's so mean!



WHAT
THE
HELL?!









...BUT
THINKING
ABOUT IT
NOW, OUR
REGULAR
LIVING
SITUATION
...

...WELL,
I MEAN,
TAKANO-
BUCHOU
...

...GETS ON
MY NERVES
PLENTY,
AND HIS
PERSONALITY
IS THE TOTAL
OPPOSITE
OF MINE...

...COMFORTABLE
IN ITS OWN
WAY...

...WAS KIND OF...



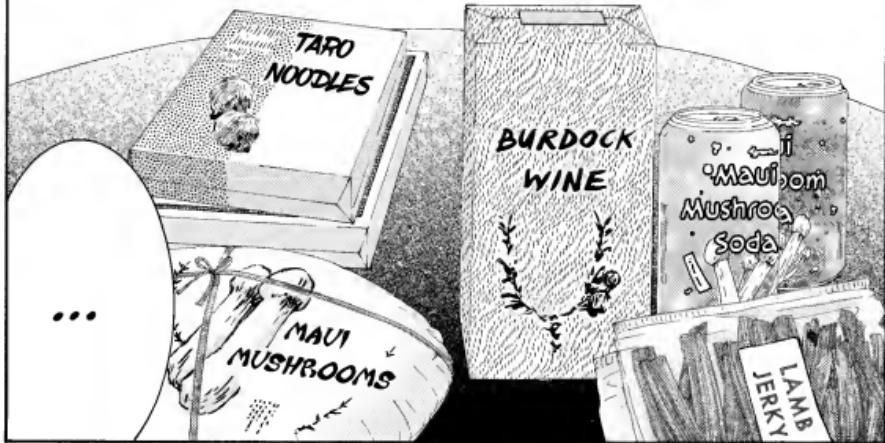
AMEMIYA!
FIND OUT
WHAT FAMOUS
PRODUCTS
COME
FROM THE
PREFECTURE
WHERE HE
LIVES!

Y-YES,
SIR!

HUH?
WHAT
ARE WE
GOING
TO
DO?

IF THAT
GUY CAN'T
GO BACK
TO THE
COUN-
TRYSIDE
WHERE HE
BELONGS
...

...WE'LL
HAVE TO
FIND A
WAY TO
MAKE IT
HAPPEN.

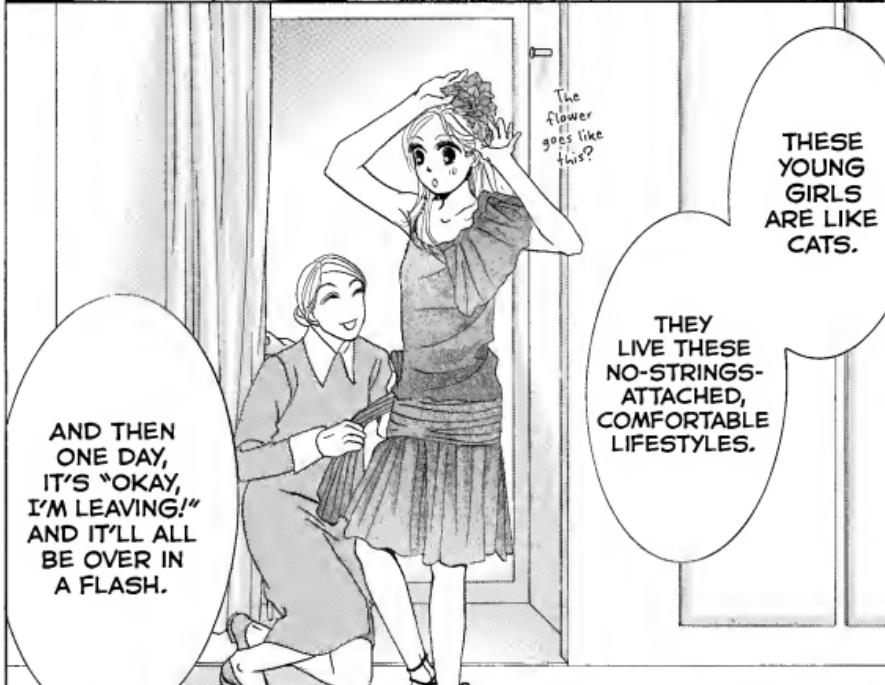


PLAN MAKE-HIM-FEEL-HOMESICK IS A FAILURE...





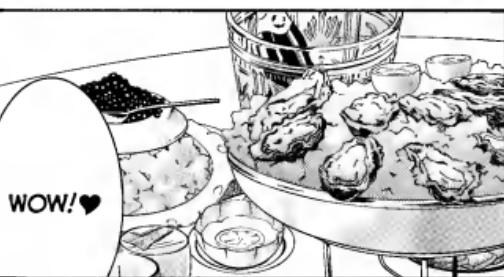






SOUNDS
PRETTY
LONELY.

WHAT
IF SHE
LEAVES
YOU ALL
ALONE
IN THAT
HOUSE?



THERE
YOU GO
AGAIN,
ACTING
ALL
TOUGH!!

...IT'D
BE A
RELIEF
ANY WAY
I THINK
ABOUT
IT.



BUT
WHAT
KIND OF
JOB DID
YOU GET
THAT LETS
YOU LIVE
THE HIGH
LIFE LIKE
THIS,
ROKU-
ROU?

BUCHOU!!
HEARING ALL
THOSE OLD
STORIES ABOUT
THE ECONOMY
BUBBLE IS
SUPER ANNOY-
ING, BUT EAT-
ING LIKE WE'RE
IN A BUBBLE IS
GREAT!

We're having fresh
oysters in the middle
of the day!

OH...
RIGHT,
ABOUT
THAT...

I'M
SO
HAPPY
FOR
YOU...

You should tell
Yamada that,
too...

OH,
SHOULD
WE GET
ANOTHER
BOTTLE
OF WINE,
TOO?

Hmph,
this is
pretty
good.

YEAH,
OF
COURSE!

CAN WE
REALLY
EAT ALL
THIS?



I WON
ALL THE
MONEY
FOR
TODAY'S
CRAZY
SHOPPING
SPREE
AND
CRAZY
FEAST

...PLAYING
PACHINKO
IN A FIT OF
DESPERATION.
IT WAS EASY
MONEY.

By the way, the price
of this wine is exactly
what I have left.

SIGH

I
HAVE
TO...

...CON-
FESS
SOME-
THING.

BECAUSE

...WHAAAT?!!
WHY
DIDN'T
YOU TELL
US?!!

AND
WHY
WERE YOU
IN A FIT OF
DESPERA-
TION?

IF I TRY
TO ADD ANY
ARTISTIC
TOUCHES TO
IT, THEY TELL
ME THAT THE
DESIGN ISN'T
FUNCTIONAL!

...I MEAN,
THE ONLY
KINDS OF
JOBS I CAN
GET BACK IN
THE COUNTRY
ARE RE-
MODELING
BARNs AND
WINDMILLS.

O-oh,
I see...

...THEY
WOULD
GET THIS
DISTANT
LOOK IN
THEIR
EYES AND
CATCH
THE
TRAIN HOME!!

BUT IF
I TRIED
TO TALK
TO THEM
ABOUT WORK
...

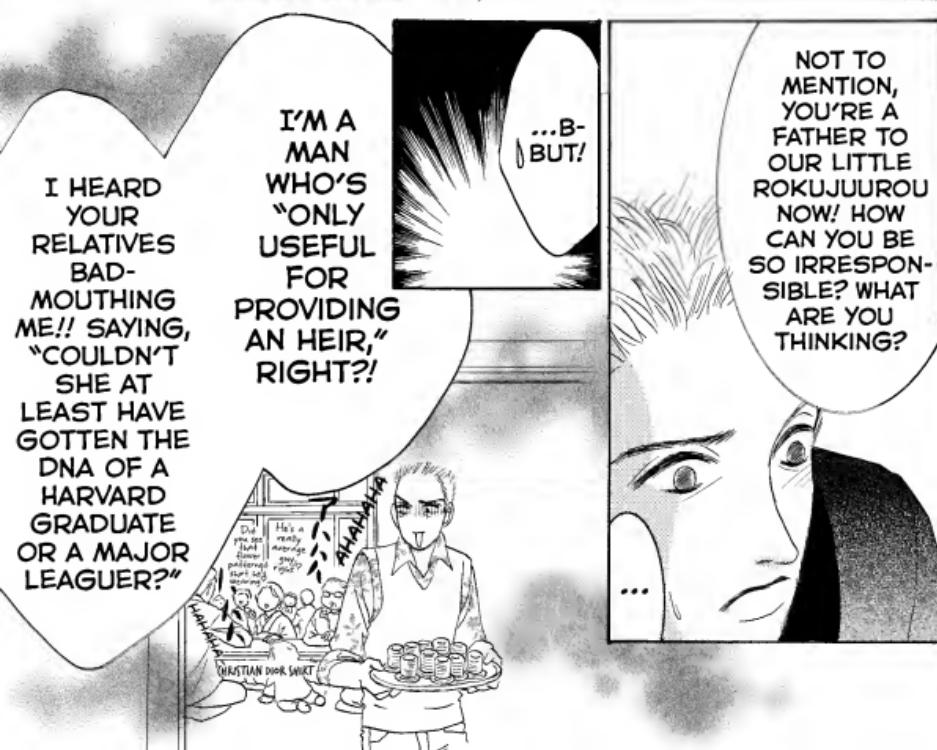
STEP
STEP

There was a
champagne
bath on the ~~frontline~~
Gold VIP
floor.
And one
time we had
drinks with
that actress
in all the
commercials.
She's
still
there
back...

STEP

...OF
THOSE
GUYS! WE
JUST GET
ALL EXCITED
MEETING
UP AND
TALKING
ABOUT THE
OLD DAYS.





...YOU
ARE
SUCH
AN
IDIOT!!

...I
CAN'T
FIND
WORK...
I HAVE
NO VALUE
AS A MAN.

I DON'T
BELONG
ANYWHERE
...

AND OUT OF ALL OF
THEM, I CHOSE TO BE
WITH YOU, A FORTY-TWO-
YEAR-OLD MAN WHO HIT
ON ME AT A CLUB!!

There aren't that
many Harvard
graduates or
major leaguers...

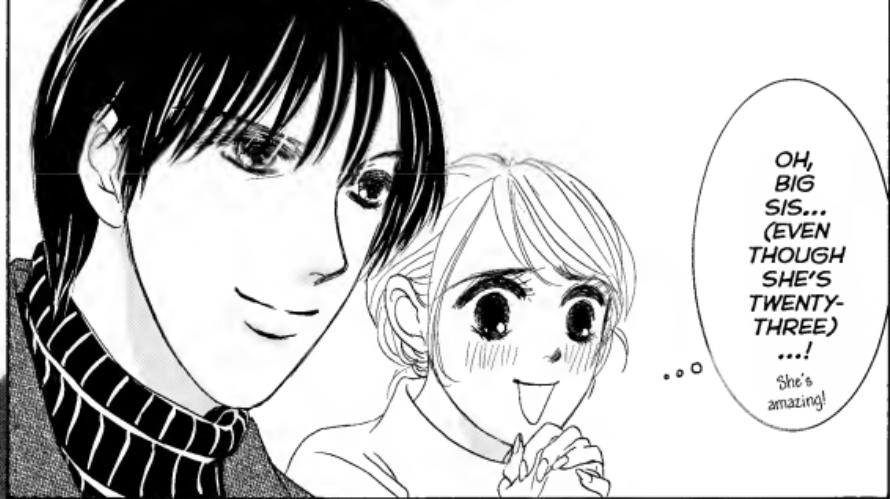
I HAD A
HUNDRED
MILLION
MARRIAGE
PROPOSALS
FROM GUYS
LIKE THAT.

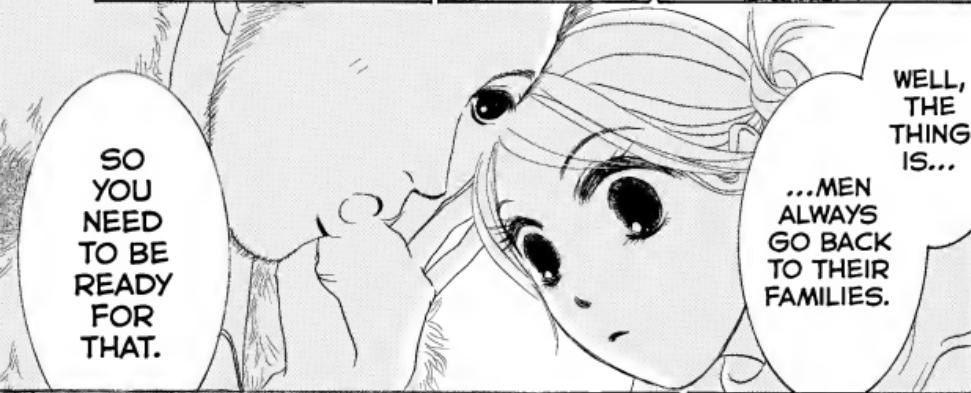
THERE'S
WAY MORE
MAJOR
LEAGUERS
THAN
HARVARD
GRADU-
ATES...

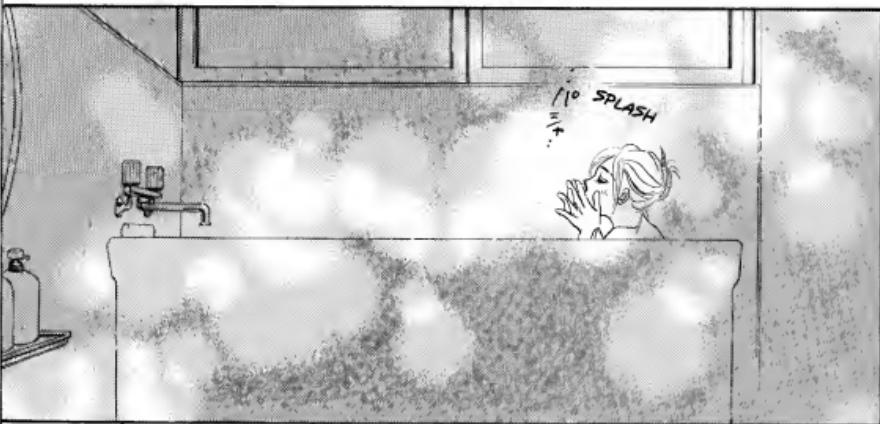
WHERE
YOU
BELONG
IS...

YOU'RE
THE ONLY
ONE I
WANTED
TO HAVE
A CHILD
WITH!

...BY
MY SIDE,
TAKING
CARE OF
ROKU-
JUUROU
AND ME!







FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, THE DEAL WAS THAT I'D HAVE TO LEAVE ONCE I FOUND A NEW PLACE TO LIVE...

...I totally forgot about that...

HE'S RIGHT, OF COURSE

...

IT'S GOING TO HAVE TO END

...

I WONDER
HOW BUCHOLI
IS GOING
TO FEEL...

...AFTER
I LEAVE.

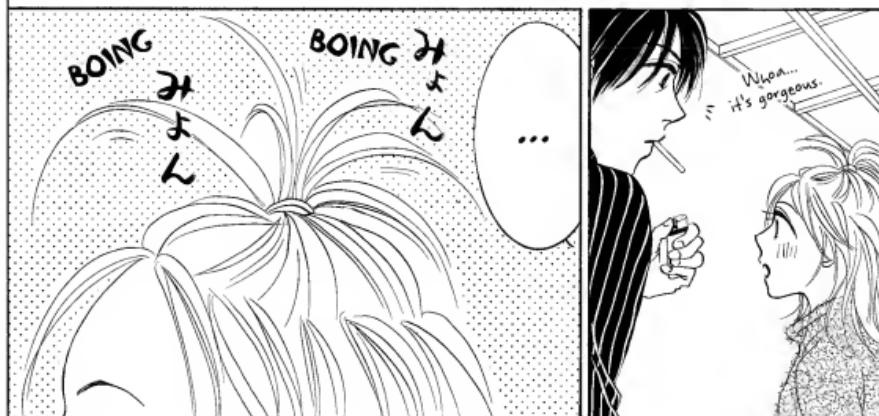




EVEN
A SMALL
GARDEN LIKE
THIS CAN
PROVIDE A
BEAUTIFUL
VIEW.

YEAH.
IT WAS
SO HEKTIC
HAVING
ROKUROU
HERE THAT
I DIDN'T
NOTICE.

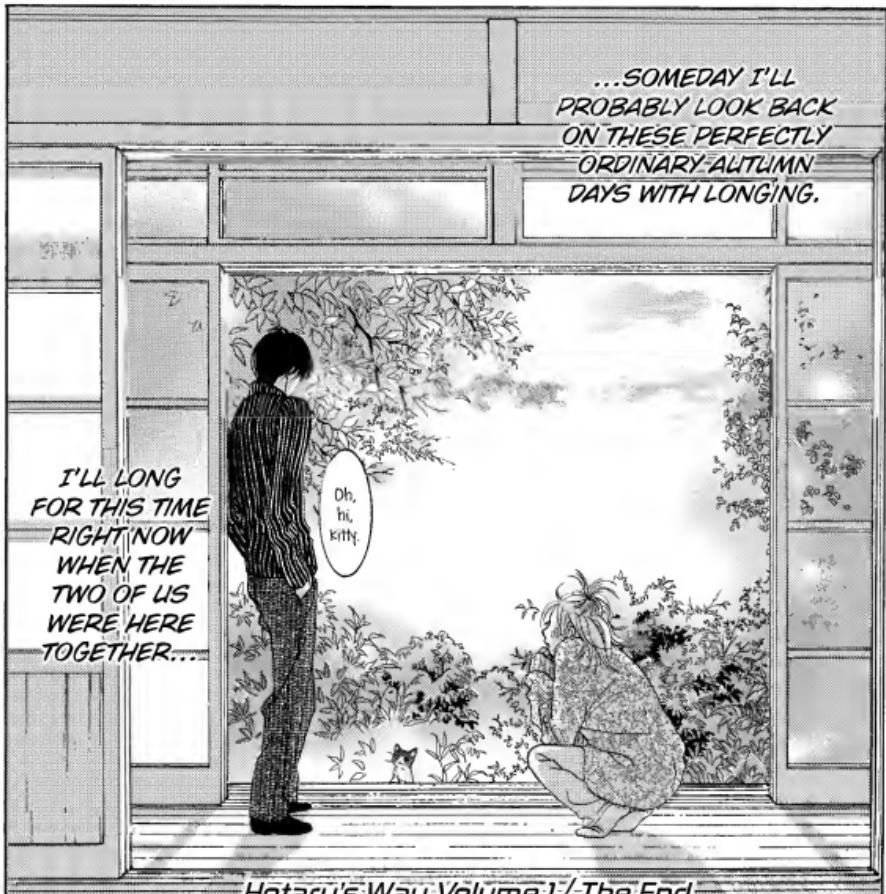
THE
LEAVES...
HAVE
CHANGED
COLOR...







BUT...





Special Thanks

Ezumin, Sayaka-san, Maki-chan, Sasaki-chan
Sanbu-san, Kondou-san, Matsunaga-san, Hiromi-chan
Keiko-chan, Tanapyon, Sachimin, K-ko-san

Tanaka-san
Satou-san, Gyouten-san, Tsukahara-san
Everyone in the Kiss editing department



SATORU HIURA ★ INTERVIEW

Full Interview >>> [KissOnLine \(http://www.kisscomic.com/\)](http://www.kisscomic.com/) !

I have a question about the protagonist, Hotaru. Why did you choose to write about a *himono* woman?

(HIURA (HEREAFTER H)): Some of my younger friends have no motivation... Well, saying it like that might give you a negative impression, but – what am I trying to say? – they don't have a burning desire for anything. I don't know if they have that in them. It's like, a little while ago, the magazine covers would have stuff like "How to have both love and a career!" written on them, remember? An "I want it all!" kind of thing.

(H): Yeah, exactly, that sort of feeling. Like you're a failure if you don't always have a boyfriend. I was thinking it would be interesting to do something completely different from that. My fans write reviews for me, but on their blogs, they also mention feelings of being withered or dried up, and I found it really interesting. I think those girls are the same age range as Hotaru. Also, a lot of my friends who are in their twenties live these carefree lifestyles whether they have love in their lives or not. I can relate more easily to that than a rigid lifestyle. It's a fun period of one's life.

It's not exactly the same as the so-called "makeinu", right? Makeinu is more like having a certain amount of status and wealth, trying to live a somewhat sensible lifestyle, and having a degree of assertiveness.

(H): I think that's something that's characteristic of the generation that grew up during the bubble economy. For Hotaru no Hikari, I think it probably applies more to Yamada-san than Hotaru.

Yeah, she goes after Makoto like a hunter on the prowl.

(H): She's just a supporting character, but I can draw the clothes Yamada-san wears off the top of my head without looking at any reference materials. I just know what kind of clothes a person like her should be wearing. I think like "She should have a slightly large collar!" and stuff. It's really fun to draw her clothes.

She doesn't have much of an effect on the main plot, but her presence leaves a strong impression.

(H): One time when I asked my assistant to draw in Yamada-san's shadow, she drew it in super thick and strong. And when I asked why, she said, "I couldn't help it!"

Those are the kinds of characters that stick with you the most. I feel the same about Hotaru, too. Even if they don't remind of yourself, you definitely get this feeling of, "It's true, it's true! Someone I know is exactly like that!"

(H): Yeah, actually, the scene where Hotaru comes home drunk is based on a true story.

What? Whose story?

(H): Mine.... The scene when she falls over in the entranceway, I can also draw that stuff right off the top of my head.

And even though she's super drunk, she's still saying, "I'm fine, just fine!"

(H): That part is also basically me.

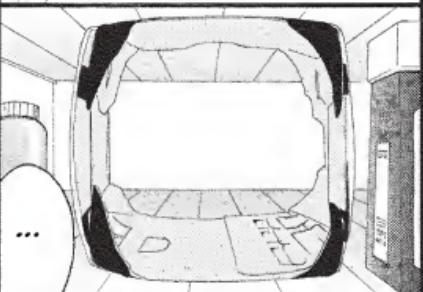
It seems like it comes naturally to draw things that you've gone through.

(H): That's true. That's why I want to know if readers also feel like, "This is just like my life!" Obviously everyone has times when they feel lazy, but if there's anyone out there with life hacks like the one Hotaru does where she plans her work outfits for the week out of magazines, please let me know.

HOTARU'S DISCOVERING BUCHOU'S MYSTERIES!



TAKANO-BUCHOU'S DISCOVERING HOTARU'S MYSTERIES!



Himono Status Check DX

Count how many apply to you and
check below for the outcome. ♥

- You don't really know your own bra size.
- When you write texts or emails, they're short and come late.
- "That's so annoying", "Do it however", and "Well, whatever" are among your favorite phrases.
- Over half of the sweaters you own have lint or cat hair on them.
- You've fixed a frayed skirt hem with doublestick tape.
- You've gotten drunk and taken home a stranger's furniture that they put out for trash pickup.
- While watching a health show, you talk back to the TV like you're having a conversation saying things like "Really?" or "Oh, I see".
- You pull off your jeans, leggings, and socks all in one go. (See the door in Chapter 4 for reference.)
- You've never had a female friend who openly declared that they are predisposed to love.
- Speaking of which, you don't think that you can be predisposed to love, medically speaking.
- You sometimes get the desire to take a vacation overseas, but then you think about how difficult it is to get to the airport and you give up.
- You can't remember the faces and names of all of your ex-boyfriends (unrequited loves count, too).
- Speaking of which, you haven't had a conversation over ten minutes long with a man who isn't a relative or a coworker.
- To be honest, you thought that having to check all these off was annoying.
- To be honest, while checking off the questions, you realized you didn't really care about the outcome one way or the other.

check!

check!



★ 1 ~ 3

Oh, wow, you're in the safe range! But I wonder if you really answered these questions honestly or not. But, anyway, depending on how diligent you remain, you could become an awesome woman with an active love life like me! Don't give up!

★ 4 ~ 7

Oh, no! This is bad! You've got good himono potential! Immediately take off your sweats, put on some makeup, get dolled up, and spend a night out on the town! If you act fast, it's not too late for you yet!

★ 8 ~ 11

Whoa! What else can I say? You're a total himono! Are you going through a hard time right now or something? How did you turn out this way? Well, I'm not going to say it's impossible, but the first thing you need to do is go out and buy some cute clothes that aren't covered in lint!

★ 12 ~ 15

There's nothing more I can possibly suggest to you. You can just keep moving forward into your beloved himono lifestyle. I will say one thing: life is long, but the time when you're viewed as a woman will be over in a flash!

LOVE HUNTER
YAMADA'S USEFUL
ADVICE TO LOWLY
HIMONO YOU!



Hotaru's Way 1

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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